

# Current History

A WORLD AFFAIRS MONTHLY

DECEMBER, 1972

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# Current History

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# Current History

December, 1972

Vol. 63, No. 376

*How stable and secure are the nations of Southeast Asia? How have they been affected by the war in Indochina? In this issue, eight specialists examine the strengths and weaknesses of the Southeast Asian nations, and evaluate United States policies in that troubled area of the world, as President Richard Nixon begins his second term.*

## Our Indochina War

BY O. EDMUND CLUBB

*Author of China and Russia: The Great Game and Twentieth Century China*

ON OCTOBER 26, 1972, the North Vietnamese government issued a statement to the effect that, as a consequence of a new October 8 initiative in confidential negotiations with the United States government for a "peaceful settlement of the Vietnam problem," on October 22 the two sides had arrived at a complete agreement for a cease-fire, with the signing ceremony scheduled for October 31. The statement summarized the main elements of the agreement, and then went on to say that, on October 23, the American side had referred to difficulties with the South Vietnamese government in Saigon and had demanded a continuation of the negotiations for the resolution of new problems.

Several hours after Hanoi broadcast its statement, presidential adviser Henry A. Kissinger met with the press in Washington and confirmed the essence of the agreement as reported by Hanoi. But he stated also that, from the American point of view, certain "ambiguities" remained to be clarified and some "linguistic problems" had to be solved; and he indicated further that Saigon's full agreement to the provisions in point was yet to be obtained. Kissinger expressed confidence that the matter could be brought to a successful conclusion in another negotiating session of three or four days—and that Saigon's agreement could be won "within the same time frame." He showed optimism: "Peace is at hand," he said.

Henry Kissinger was the man who had negotiated

the agreement with Hanoi's representative Le Duc Tho at Paris; but he had also, from October 18 to October 23, met with South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu in Saigon; and on October 24, Thieu took to the air waves to warn the nation against being confused by "recent rumors of a peace settlement." Charging that Hanoi sought a cease-fire as a part of a "cunning plot," he asserted that "any agreement leading to a peace settlement must have the signature of the government of South Vietnam."<sup>1</sup>

Thus, on the eve of the American presidential election, the Nixon administration appeared intent upon ending the Indochina War, fulfilling the President's pledge of March, 1968, when campaigning for the presidency, to "end the war and win the peace in the Pacific." But the Kissinger-Tho draft was not in fact signed on October 31. The final obstacle was not minor, as suggested by Henry Kissinger, but major; there was a collision between the objectives of Saigon and those of Washington.

The history of 1968–1972 highlights the difficulties. President Nixon's promise to end the war almost surely had won him the presidency in November, 1968. Success in this task would logically have required a fundamental change in the strategy that had governed previous administrations, since victory was still an elusive will-o'-the-wisp "at the end of the tunnel." Official thinking in this connection had theretofore been exposed to public scrutiny only after careful screening; but with the publication in 1971 of *The Pentagon Papers*<sup>2</sup> the underlying philosophy, strategy and objectives of the United States with respect to Southeast Asia were at last amply documented.

The mythos of the American cold war ideology had

<sup>1</sup> For the text of Hanoi's statement and the Kissinger news conference, see *The New York Times*, October 27, 1972. For the Thieu statement, see *ibid.*, October 25, 1972.

<sup>2</sup> Citations in the present essay are from *The New York Times* series, Neil Sheehan and others, *The Pentagon Papers* (Toronto; N.Y.: Bantam Books, 1971).

led initially to shouldering the self-arrogated task of "containing" Soviet and Chinese communisms, easily equated with Indochinese revolution in a simplistic political theory. The "domino theory" was an essential part of the strategic theorizing; and the constant use of "worst possible case" reasoning, in the context of the cold war ideology, regularly magnified the presumed dangers inherent in a given situation.<sup>3</sup> The heavens were always about to fall—unless the United States sprang to prop them up. The need to justify policies and actions often led to the practice of deception—of the Congress, the nation, the world. In the end, the deceivers time and again demonstrably deluded themselves.

As the Republicans prepared to inaugurate their administration in 1969, it was reported that a reappraisal of Vietnam strategy was in process, and that six major options were under consideration.<sup>4</sup> One proposed a substantial troop reduction, either by mutual agreement or by unilateral action, extended gradually over a period of four or five years as the South Vietnamese army (ARVN) developed the ability to carry the main combat load. A second approach envisaged the unilateral cutback of United States force levels from the existing 550,000 to 100,000–150,000 men, thus reducing the war costs in terms of men and dollars to levels acceptable to the American people for a long war. The "toughest proposal" was for the administration to let Hanoi know that it was contemplating a resumption of bombing, to be aimed at major military targets, the blockade of North Vietnam's chief ports, including Haiphong, "and even an invasion of North Vietnam" (in the words of the reporter). In due course, these three options would all leave their imprint on the American strategy. At the request of presidential foreign policy adviser Henry A. Kissinger, a proposal to the Lyndon Johnson administration by five Rand Corporation consultants that an "extrication" policy be adopted by which the United States would commit itself to complete unilateral withdrawal from Vietnam by a fixed date was omitted from the "complete range of options" presented to the National Security Council in January, 1969.<sup>5</sup>

It has now been revealed further that, in response to questions submitted to them on January 21, 1969, by Kissinger at President Nixon's request, various United States government agencies submitted their

respective analyses of the Vietnam war; the compendium of documents became identified as National Security Study Memorandum 1 (NSSM1).<sup>6</sup> An observation by the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) bore especial significance for the issue of peace or war:

The Joint Chiefs of Staff consider that the essential conditions for a cessation of hostilities include an effective cease-fire, verified withdrawal to North Vietnam of all North Vietnamese personnel (including those in Laos and Cambodia), verified cessation of infiltration, substantial reduction in terrorism, repatriation of U.S. prisoners, agreement to re-establish the demilitarized zone with adequate safeguards, no prohibition against U.S. assistance to insure that the RVNAF [Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces—Saigon's ARVN] is capable of coping with the residual security threat and preservation of the sovereignty of the GVN [Government of Vietnam—Saigon regime].

The new administration's strategic thinking was rounded off in the presidential news interview of late July, 1969, on Guam. On that occasion, President Nixon stated (with direct quotation prohibited) that the United States proposed to continue to play a significant role in the Pacific and in Asia, that it would stand by its treaty commitments, and that Asian nations themselves should increasingly assume the burden of their own defense. One quotation crept into the text: "... the role of the United States in Vietnam, or the Philippines, or Thailand, or any of these countries which have internal subversion, is to help them fight the war but not to fight the war for them."<sup>7</sup> The "Vietnamization" concept had been born. Projecting from the Nixon thinking of 1968, it was evident that it was proposed that Asians should supply the ground forces, and that the United States should "help" with air and naval forces, in the war in Vietnam and in other revolutionary Asian wars in which the United States might become involved.

The change of administration had evidently brought some shift in strategy, but no basic change in strategic objectives. There were new military undertakings—some of which had been proposed earlier only to be discarded. As commander of the United States forces in Vietnam, General William C. Westmoreland had informed President Johnson in April, 1967, that he had contingency plans for a thrust of ARVN forces accompanied by American *advisers* into Cambodia, and another plan for the undertaking of ground operations in Laos by an elite ARVN division with United States artillery and air support.<sup>8</sup> Cambodia was actually made a part of the Southeast Asian war zone by the invasion of ARVN forces and U.S. *troops* in April, 1970; then, ten short months later, in February, 1971, an ARVN invasion of Laos made it, too, an integral part of the war theater. Although the ARVN troops were heavily supported by United States air power, they met disastrous defeat.

It is against the background of the military contest that the political maneuvers of the two sides are to be

<sup>3</sup> See for example the Joint Chiefs of Staff in January, 1962, on the "eventualities" deemed attendant upon the "loss" of the Southeast Asian mainland, *Pentagon Papers*, pp. 153–54.

<sup>4</sup> William Beecher, *The New York Times*, January 12, 1969.

<sup>5</sup> Daniel Ellsberg, *Papers on the War* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972), p. 23; see also in this connection Anthony Lewis, "From the Sublime. . .," op-ed page, *The New York Times*, September 2, 1972.

<sup>6</sup> See *The New York Times*, April 26, 1972, for excerpts.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, July 26, 1969.

<sup>8</sup> *The Pentagon Papers*, pp. 529–30.



viewed. There had been occasions during the Johnson administration when a compromise peace seemed within the realm of possibility—but the opportunities were lost. Each time, Washington evidently chose to cleave to its larger objectives. It has been disclosed that, in late 1968 and early 1969, there was yet another chance to end the war; but it, too, was passed up.<sup>9</sup> The four-sided Paris peace talks, sabotaged by President Nguyen Van Thieu in the closing days of the Johnson administration, got off the ground in January, 1969. The basic Hanoi-National Liberation Front (NLF) position as finally set forth in Hanoi's 9-point plan of June 26, 1971, and the NLF's 7-point proposal of July 1, 1971,<sup>10</sup> proposed cessation of American military action throughout Indochina and the withdrawal of United States and allied foreign forces by a terminal date, the release of all military and civilian prisoners of war within the same time period, a cessation of United States support of the Saigon regime, payment by the United States of reparations for damages inflicted upon both North and South Vietnam, and (the NLF's proposal) formation of "a broad three-segment government of national concord" to govern during the interim between the restoration of peace and the holding of general elections in South Vietnam.

Washington had an 8-point proposal, which it presented to the Hanoi representatives on October 11, 1971.<sup>11</sup> There was to be an internationally supervised cease-fire effective coincident with the signing of the agreement, a settlement by the concerned Indochinese of the problem of implementation of the principle that "all armed forces of the countries of Indochina must remain within their national frontiers," and a "free, democratic presidential election," internationally supervised, in South Vietnam within six months of the agreement, with the incumbent President and Vice President to resign one month before the election.

There was patently little ground for accommodation of the antipodal positions. Hanoi's Le Duc Tho only stated the obvious when he said, at a later date, that "everyone knows that the most arduous problem existing between the two sides is the problem of power in South Vietnam."<sup>12</sup>

Hanoi and the NLF would naturally show wariness, given the bad faith shown by the United States and Ngo Dinh Diem with respect to the 1954 Geneva accords, which had included provision for an interna-

tionally supervised cease-fire, the repatriation of fighting forces, internationally supervised general elections for a single Vietnam that had been only provisionally and temporarily divided into two parts by the military demarcation line, and a prohibition of the establishment of new military bases "throughout Viet Nam."

### A KOREAN SOLUTION?

But there was another historical precedent. President Nixon could not but remember that in December, 1952, Stalin had expressed a readiness to assist in ending the Korean War; that Peking, after receipt of an indirectly-conveyed American threat to use nuclear weapons against China, had in the spring of 1953 shifted its position in the long-drawn-out truce negotiations; and that the war was subsequently brought to an end on a compromise basis that kept the pro-American Seoul regime in power, with United States armed forces garrisoned in South Korea (under the United Nations flag) for its protection. An American garrison remains there still, nearly two decades after the establishment of a cease-fire. Why should there not be a "Korean solution" for the Indochina War? When President Nixon journeyed to Peking in February, 1972, it was quite clear that one of his purposes was to ask China to help settle the Indochina War, on American terms.

Peking finds ample Marxist and geopolitical reasons to oppose a power that aims at dominating the critical sector of Southeast Asia. The historical example of Korea could only act to crystallize the Chinese determination to foster no compromise which would leave "residual" United States forces to preside, however "temporarily," over the destiny of Indochina. The communiqué issued at Shanghai upon the termination of the Nixon visit indicated not surprisingly the Chinese rejection of the American suit: Peking unequivocally sided with the revolutionaries.

Just one month later, Hanoi launched a general offensive against the South. South Vietnamese forces faltered in the defense; some broke and fled, leaving their heavy United States equipment to the enemy. The thesis of "Vietnamization" was being disproved on the battlefield. The American command turned to the massive utilization of air power to save the Saigon regime—even if the doctrine were lost. The issue of the efficacy of air power for the suppression of an Asian "people's war" became critical.

In a memorandum addressed to various high government officials, in May, 1967, Walt W. Rostow, presidential assistant for national security, had recommended various actions designed, in his words, "to close the top of the funnel" whereby personnel and supplies were channeled into South Vietnam. As described by Rostow,

Under this strategy we would mine the major harbors and, perhaps, bomb port facilities and even consider blockade.

<sup>9</sup> See in this connection the November 12, 1968, news conference of former Secretary of Defense Clark Clifford, *The New York Times*, November 13, 1968; also *ibid.*, August 16, 1972, and W. Averell Harriman, "Vietnam: That Missed Opportunity," op-ed page, *ibid.*, August 26, 1972.

<sup>10</sup> For texts, see *ibid.*, February 1, 1972, and July 2, 1971.

<sup>11</sup> For text, as released by Hanoi after Washington had made statements regarding the matter in contravention of agreement to keep the discussions secret, see *ibid.*, February 1, 1972.

<sup>12</sup> Press conference at Paris, May 12, 1972; for excerpts see *ibid.*, May 13, 1972.

In addition, we would attack systematically the rail lines between Hanoi and mainland China.<sup>13</sup>

In mid-April, 1972, in the face of the North Vietnamese offensive, that plan was effectively implemented with the launching of heavy air strikes by B-52's in the vicinity of Hanoi and against the port facilities of Haiphong. President Nixon, addressing the nation on April 26, undertook yet another commitment regarding the Indochina War: "We will not be defeated and we will never surrender our friends to Communist aggression." In early May, the United States mined Haiphong and other North Vietnam ports. At the same time, President Nixon offered amended conditions for ending the military actions in point and, effectively, ending the war:

First, all American prisoners of war must be returned.

Second, there must be an internationally supervised cease-fire throughout Indochina.

Once prisoners of war are released, once the internationally supervised cease-fire has begun, we will stop all acts of force throughout Indochina.

And at that time we will proceed with a complete withdrawal of all American forces from Vietnam within four months.<sup>14</sup>

Significantly, though the President had regularly voiced opposition to any effort to impose a coalition government on South Vietnam, the May 8 statement made no reference to attendant political arrangements, and it also contained no stipulation for withdrawal of North Vietnamese forces from South Vietnam. This was presumably a reflection of two circumstances: 1) the current proposals at the Paris peace talks envisaged a separation of the military issue from a political settlement, and 2) American estimates theretofore had been that Vietnamization was working, and that the ARVN forces would be able to deal handily with the numerically very inferior North Vietnamese and NLF forces present in South Vietnam. Said President Nixon:

Now these terms are generous terms. They are terms which would not require surrender and humiliation on the part of anybody. They would permit the United States to withdraw with honor. . . . They would allow negotiations and a political settlement between the Vietnamese themselves.

The proffered terms, he said, had "the full concurrence of our South Vietnamese allies. . . ." This was

a radical departure from the earlier aim of achieving a military victory.

The American bombing continued, and so did the North Vietnamese offensive. There seemed to be some return to an earlier American stance in President Nixon's talk of August 29 to the press. He said "this war" had reached a point where it *should* be brought to an end; but he went on to say that his 1968 commitment had been to seek an "honorable" end to the war. "We will seek peace," but not "at the cost of surrender, dishonor and destruction of the ability of the United States to conduct foreign policy in a responsible way."<sup>15</sup> Moreover, there would "absolutely" be no slackening or cessation of the bombing in the absence of an all-inclusive *Indochina* agreement. This meant that, as proposed in National Security Study Memorandum 1 (1969), any peace settlement must govern the situation in Laos and Cambodia as well as in Vietnam. The war having been extended to those two other countries, the logic of the proposition was unassailable. Yet the fact that Cambodia and Laos were not even represented at the Paris talks was an indication of the distance there was yet to go, at best, to reach a negotiated peace.

Another gauge is discovered in the persistent emphasis on the term "honorable." Washington naturally does not expect to gain honor for its military tactics. Saturation bombing and the designation of "free-fire zones," the employment of napalm and anti-personnel bombs, crop destruction and defoliation, manipulation of weather patterns, the attempted creation of firestorms for the destruction of Indochinese forests and the use of "Rome plows" to scarify the land have badly bloodied the Indo-Chinese peoples and have wrought great ecological damage in *both* North and South Vietnam.<sup>16</sup> Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara observed in May, 1967,

The picture of the world's greatest superpower killing or seriously injuring 1,000 non-combatants a week, while trying to pound a tiny backward nation into submission on an issue whose merits are hotly disputed, is not a pretty one.<sup>17</sup>

But in employing the term "honor" the administration thinks of the achievement of strategic objectives, not of military tactics. In sum and substance, the

(Continued on page 275)

<sup>13</sup> *The Pentagon Papers*, p. 574.

<sup>14</sup> *The New York Times*, May 9, 1972.

<sup>15</sup> From text in *ibid.*, August 30, 1972.

<sup>16</sup> See in this general connection Arthur H. Westing and E. W. Pfeiffer, "The Cratering of Indochina," *Scientific American*, May, 1972, pp. 20-29; Raphael Littauer and Norman Uphoff, eds., *Air War Study Group*, Cornell University, *The Air War in Indochina* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972), esp. Chap. 8, "The Ecological Impact of the Air War"; for a description of the operation of the Rome plows, see Iver Peterson, *The New York Times*, May 7, 1971, and for a searing commentary on the whole see Anthony Lewis, "Scorch Their Earth," op-ed page, *ibid.*, May 8, and same author, "Where We Are," op-ed page, *ibid.*, September 25, 1972.

<sup>17</sup> *The Pentagon Papers*, p. 580.

O. Edmund Clubb spent 18 years in China with the U.S. Foreign Service. He has been Consul General in Vladivostok, the U.S.S.R.; Mukden and Changchun, Manchuria; and in Peking, China. From 1950 to 1952, he was Director of Chinese Affairs in the Department of State. Mr. Clubb is the author of *China and Russia: The "Great Game"* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), and *Twentieth Century China* (New York: Columbia University Press, revised edition, 1972).

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*What kind of political settlement will be effective in Vietnam? Outlining the history of the long and costly war, this specialist warns that "even if the South some day achieves a viable government and peace, and even if this regime should establish friendly relations with the North, unifying Vietnam without additional trauma and without the seizure of one of the two zones by the other will be a long, difficult process."*

## South Vietnam: Paying Off the Mortgage

BY JEAN-CLAUDE POMONTI  
Saigon correspondent, *Le Monde*

THE INDOCHINESE CONFLICT entered a new phase in 1972. For the first time since World War II, the winds of détente were blowing in Asia, and the test of strength which began last spring in Vietnam appeared to have led to a settlement that would guarantee the military withdrawal of the United States and the participation, in one form or another, of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam in the Saigon government. The nature of a viable political system in the South, like that of its relationship with the North, will undoubtedly take far longer to become clear. But if the digression initiated by American military intervention was ending, it was ending without achieving its objective. The permanence of a revolutionary movement in the South is not in doubt, and any fruitful negotiation must start from this reality.

Since the beginning of United States military intervention, the Vietcong had launched three major offensives, in 1964–1965, in 1968, and in 1972. The first time, profiting from the paralysis prevailing in Saigon because of the clashes of military cliques and religious factions, the Vietcong extended its control to the entire rural area. In 1965, even the major highways came progressively under its control.

Washington reacted by sending more than half a million men, supported by contingents sent by its South Korean, Australian and even Thai clients, to Vietnam. During the three years that followed, the South Vietnamese army played the role of an auxiliary force; at the same time, in the spring of 1966, the South Vietnamese government barely surmounted a crisis precipitated by the Hué and Danang Buddhists. However, the dispatch of an American expeditionary force prevented the establishment of a government in Saigon which would have had at its core the National Liberation Front and its fellow-travelers.

In 1968, supported by several divisions of the North Vietnam people's army, the Vietcong launched a general offensive against more than one hundred South Vietnamese towns with the intention of establishing the people's power in these areas. This offensive, the Tet offensive, failed to attain its objective. Retaliation was brutal, and, at the cost of considerable destruction, the Americans and the Saigon army were able to retake control of the towns; they were also able to occupy farmland often deserted by a rural population which had been terrorized by American troops and air power. The Tet offensive was followed by two other waves of attacks, in May and in August, 1968, but they were successively weaker.

The Tet counteroffensive mounted by the Americans and their South Vietnamese allies late in 1968 and early in 1969—the campaigns of "accelerated pacification"—allowed them to bolster the Saigon regime, all the while continuing to participate in the futile conference which opened in Paris in May, 1968. The Saigon army and its militia units were trained and supplied with modern materiel. By June, 1969, their considerable strengthening as well as the closing of the port of Sihanoukville (where a large part of the supplies destined for the forces of liberation were unloaded from Chinese boats) enabled President Richard Nixon to announce the withdrawal of the first contingent of American soldiers. The program of "Vietnamization" had begun.

### VIETNAMIZATION

The following year, this policy appeared to bear sufficient fruit to allow an acceleration of the withdrawal of American troops, the consolidation of the Saigon regime and, at the same time, military incursions into neighboring Cambodia, shortly after the coup d'état against Prince Sihanouk, and the align-

ment of the Phnompenh government with the United States. Ousted even from some of its frontier sanctuaries, the Vietcong found itself on the defensive in 1970, despite the withdrawal of more than half the American troops.

This situation was noticeably modified in 1971, above all because the Saigon regime did not succeed in passing satisfactorily the two tests that awaited it. In the spring, the incursion of South Vietnam's elite troops on the Ho Chi Minh trail in Southern Laos underlined the weak points of its army despite its unparalleled American logistic support. To avoid a rout, these troops had to fall back on South Vietnamese territory under difficult conditions and after suffering heavy losses. Although the North Vietnamese had also paid a high price to defend their trail, they had succeeded in forcing Saigon to renounce incursions against their sanctuaries in the Indochinese cordillera. In effect, before the end of the year, Saigon's troops had also evacuated northeastern Cambodia.

The second test was the presidential election of October 3, 1971. This was the first real test of institutions adopted four years earlier under American pressure. The already low prestige of those institutions sunk further in this badly acted tragi-comedy which ended with the single candidacy of the incumbent President and his election with 94.3 per cent of the vote.

### LOST OPPORTUNITY

While the Saigon regime failed this test, President Nixon voluntarily passed up a chance to withdraw his country from the conflict by using the presidential election at least to allow, if not facilitate, the representation of forces in Saigon ready to negotiate seriously with the National Liberation Front. He thus accepted the prospect of a test of strength on the battlefield. The following six months saw, in effect, the two camps actively preparing. The Vietcong mounted a considerable effort to relay troops, munitions and war materiel southward. Their attacks, in Cambodia and then in Laos, allowed them to protect their rear guard. On their side, the American air raids against enemy infiltration routes increased, including raids against the area north of the seventeenth parallel, and apparently the American command was laying plans for an eventual offensive.

The third major Communist offensive began in the demilitarized zone at the end of March, 1972; North Vietnamese artillery, tanks and infantry quickly dismantled the defense positions that the Americans had entrusted to their South Vietnamese allies. This was followed, in April, with attacks against Anloc, only 100 kilometers north of Saigon, then against the network of bases in the north and northwest which protected the city of Kontum in the Central Highlands.

Three fronts near their "sanctuaries" and their communication lines were thus opened with the obvious goal of occupying and dividing Saigon's reserves and especially the American air force; at the same time, the guerrillas were progressively reactivated in the countryside, in order to undermine the "pacification" program in the rural sector.

From the beginning, this offensive took a different turn from that of 1968. The Vietcong did not play all the cards it had and did not attack the big cities. With the support of tanks and heavy artillery, its first attacks were led most often by units of the North Vietnam People's Army, which had been invited to play the role of a "lever" to set the people's war in motion once again. Their assaults took place at the periphery of South Vietnamese territory and against Saigon's regular troops, with the avowed intention of decimating them or at least of demoralizing them.

In the first phase, which lasted until the end of June, the essential objective of the revolutionaries was to deliver as many blows as possible to the best troops of Saigon's army as a means of demoralizing this new army which they considered the backbone of the South Vietnamese regime and of the American policy of "Vietnamization." In this way, they hoped somehow to create a sort of springboard for the second phase, which would reestablish their freedom of maneuver, regain for them a foothold in the villages and enable them to infiltrate into the cities which are in the grip of economic crisis. Their key slogan was thus to "fight and build up" and to conserve their energies for later, in the event that this campaign lasted several months, if not several years.

The Americans were ready to counterattack. At the least, the speed of their reaction implied that they had already made plans: dispatch of a war fleet, intense bombing of the North with advanced techniques and, finally, mining the principal North Vietnamese ports. An almost complete range of non-nuclear weapons was thus deployed to weaken the North, all the while trying to isolate it even more from its Russian and Chinese allies and suppliers. Meanwhile, in the South, the American air force did its best to guarantee protection for Saigon's most exposed troops.

In the demilitarized zone, as in the Central Highlands, several South Vietnamese units collapsed, often without much resistance. At the beginning of May, the North Vietnamese army controlled the province of Quangtri, and the positions in Tancanh and Dakto in the Central Highlands had fallen. Further south, after a month of combat, a column of 15,000 South Vietnamese was never successful in breaking the stranglehold around Anloc. In addition, within the same month, the Vietcong had established its control over the three northern districts of the province of Binh Dinh, while its first attacks against



"pacification" were bearing fruit in the Mekong Delta and on the coast of central Vietnam.

The remarkable coordination of the first phase of the offensive, nonetheless, did not permit the Vietcong and the North Vietnamese to attain all their objectives. At the beginning of May, at the moment when the debacle at Quangtri provoked panic in Hué and the flight of half a million refugees toward Danang, the air raids, notably the B-52 bombing raids, prevented the Vietcong from seizing Anloc. At the end of May, it tried to take Kontum and failed, too exhausted by the air raids. Meanwhile, the first infantry division and the Saigon marines had organized the defense of Hué. Another elite division, the paratroopers, arrived soon afterwards and helped them considerably.

Six weeks after the first attacks it was clear that, under the powerful protection of the American air force, certain Saigon units were holding up well, while others, much weaker, were falling apart. For Saigon and Washington, the worst had temporarily been averted, notably the fall of Hué, although the Vietcong had succeeded, in the space of two months, in setting up the springboard it needed to continue its attacks against "pacification" all over South Vietnam.

The period following was more confused. As early as June, the Saigon army had regained a foothold in the Quangtri plain while the siege of Anloc was loosening. The situation in the Central Highlands was quieter, and on the nearby coast Saigon had re-occupied three district capitals lost in May. However, during the summer, guerrilla warfare was still spreading in the Mekong delta; at the same time, the cities of the central coast of Vietnam and even areas close to Saigon began to suffer small commando attacks of sapeurs and rockets and mortar shells.

In August, guerrilla warfare became intense again in much of the populated countryside, and the Vietcong began to circulate more freely. The Communist offensive was again launched in several regions, as indicated by the first infiltrations of cadres from the National Liberation Front into zones under government control and even into the heart of the administration in Saigon. "Pacification" had undergone its first real test and its fragility no longer needed proof. To put it into one formula: American attacks against the North were a retaliation of frustration. The NLF remained an essential factor in the South Vietnamese political equation, regardless of the importance of the role played by the North Vietnamese on the battlefield.

The fighting, resuming in the South after three relatively calm years, made the life of the South Vietnamese steadily more miserable. The products of the war—the urban ghettos—increased, and the mass of one million refugees, like the war effort itself, constituted

a new burden for an economy already shaken by the successive withdrawal of American troops. The morale of the people suffered in proportion to the increase of victims and destruction as well as the extra burden of a corrupt and brutal army which dominated the country.

The destruction suffered by the North was perhaps of the same order of magnitude since, most of the time, the objectives of the air raids were strategic, economic and civilian at the same time. But North Vietnam's social structure and her system of values were not threatened, in contrast to the South, where for seven years the South Vietnamese had to live with a powerful expeditionary force which paid little attention to their welfare and their values.

### SAIGON'S FRAGILITY

On the political level, the experiment which began in 1949 and was still continuing in 1972 was above all a series of compromises and not a liberal alternative to the social revolution conceived by the Marxists who had been leading the anti-French resistance. Of course, time has taken its toll and, in the space of 23 years, Vietnam has changed. But it remains difficult to explain the fragility of successive regimes in Saigon during this period without taking this fact into account. In 1954, following the signing of the Geneva Agreement, those who were victorious against the French army, the victors of Dienbienphu, found themselves in Hanoi, while those who had chosen to battle on the side of the French and the fence-sitters regrouped in Saigon.

In the beginning, the French had succeeded in persuading a reluctant Bao-Dai to head a government which accepted, at least at the outset, limited sovereignty. For five years (1949–1954), under the protection of a French expeditionary force and the patronage of the former colonial administration, the basic structures of this state were established and brought to life by political forces which chose either collaboration with the French against the resistance, or a wait-and-see policy.

For this reason, the South Vietnamese political regimes (that of Bao-Dai, followed by that of Ngo Dinh Diem, 1954–1963, and Nguyen Van Thieu, 1967 —), resemble one another. Each had its own institutions, its style and its personalities. However, each had the same personnel and the same methods of governing. Dependent on foreign aid, of which it found itself more or less fatally a prisoner, the government was forced to tolerate a political opposition imposed by its French and then its American protector.

Lacking more substantial popular support, the regime became dependent on its own instruments of coercion—the police and the army—with whose aid it followed the only coherent policy that remained—witch-hunting. Since foreign assistance did not suc-

ceed in filling the political vacuum, the absence of organized social and political forces encouraged the development of politico-religious groups and special interest groups who stole scenes from one another until they had to bow, first temporarily, then permanently, to the army, which became in the meantime a state within the state.

While most of the population followed events attentively without always supporting a Liberation Front which had not yet, in its eyes, sufficiently proved itself, the majority scarcely found any reason to offer its votes to the Saigon regime. In a quarter of a century of effort, neither the United States nor France succeeded in producing a viable alternative in Saigon. Thus, in 1972, when the North Vietnam people's army launched a military offensive to support the guerrillas and the political leaders of the National Liberation Front, a deadlock was reached again; and in proof of his determination and his support for the Saigon regime, President Nixon could do no less than order his B-52 raids on Haiphong harbor.

#### NEW FACTORS

On the other hand, in the course of time, a series of new elements has developed. Since 1954, the two parts of Vietnam have known radically different experiences. In the North, a socialist society with a still markedly rural character was established, then consolidated; the resumption of the conflict was undoubtedly one of its cornerstones. South of the 17th parallel, where the war had become a way of life, the urbanization of society was precipitated by the war (more than half the population lives in populated areas of more than 20,000 inhabitants, and greater Saigon shelters nearly four million out of less than 18 million in the entire South), and modern institutions have never had time to take root.

In addition, time has done its work. In the North, President Ho Chi Minh has been dead for three years and the small group of his lieutenants who actually run the state will eventually pass the reins to a generation which assumed responsibilities not during the era of anti-French resistance but during the era following the Geneva Agreement. In the South, half the present population was not yet born at the time of the victory of Dienbienphu and a rising generation, less committed to the system than its predecessors, is emerging.

These factors did not help to bring together the South and the North and, in the perspective of a hypothetical reunification of the country, they will constitute solid obstacles despite the existence of a common nation and civilization. Even if the South some day achieves a viable government and peace, and even if this regime should establish friendly relations with the North, unifying Vietnam without additional trauma and without the seizure of one of the

two zones by the other will be a long, difficult process.

Until 1972, the conflict remained without solution because the dispute could not be settled on the battlefield and because the two camps did not speak the same language. And it was precisely on the principle of their independence that the Vietnam revolutionaries remained unwilling to compromise.

Washington, with its policy of "Vietnamization," offered in effect only an "honorable peace." The Provisional Revolutionary Government of the South of Vietnam (and not of South Vietnam) supported by the government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (and not North Vietnam) offered, along with a formula first for a government of national concord, then for a coalition, in Saigon, a compromise to the South Vietnamese forces which were not fighting at its side or were even fighting against it. But it excluded a compromise with the Americans and their local allies as such (to the latter, who were generally regarded as "puppets," it offered only a pardon).

#### EVENTS OF 1972

The turn taken by the conflict in 1972 clearly modified this situation. The détente which began in Asia—and to which the United States made a large contribution—not only overshadowed the problem of Vietnam but relegated it to the second rank of priorities for the great powers. The People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union demonstrated that they would not take unlimited risks to aid their Indochinese allies. For America, its investments in Vietnam had undoubtedly grown out of proportion to its interests. For President Nixon, the problem was to find a way out of the conflict rather than to guarantee the color of the flag that would float over Saigon. For their part, his adversaries had attempted to apply military pressure to prove that, in the South, their political trumps were not negligible. In their view, it was unrealistic to belittle the forces of the National Liberation Front, relegating them to the level of wandering bands, because, several years earlier, they had been unable to take the initiative from half a million American soldiers. In order to prove that the political spectrum in the South had not been appreciably modified by the American intervention and that a structured and revolutionary movement still had its

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*"The two drives of survival and renewal can be seen in the series of political building moves made by Ne Win since the takeover in 1962, and the shape of the structure he has sought to construct has become increasingly clearer in the last two years."*

## Burma: The Politics of Survival and Renewal

BY RICHARD BUTWELL

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BURMA'S POLITICS have been largely shaped by two powerful forces in the nearly a quarter of a century since independence was reclaimed from Britain in 1948: the drives for survival and renewal. These were the moving influences in the period when U Nu and the civilian democrats governed the country from 1948 to 1962. And they have underlain most of the politics and policies of the years of military rule under General Ne Win since 1962, including the blueprint for the post-Ne Win political order that was revealed in 1972.

The drive for renewal is a positive one, seeking to elevate the Burmese to a position of esteem once again in their own, even more than in foreigners', eyes. It has variously expressed itself in efforts to reclaim the national economy from foreign domination, in policies to promote the national culture and language and in recently accelerated moves under Ne Win to wipe out the last vestige of the British political contribution to the country.

The drive for survival, on the other hand, is a negative force—rooted in fear, not hope or pride. Ethnic rebellions, in which second generation insurgents now take part, reflect the apprehensions of some members of these minorities that neither they nor their cultures can otherwise survive the unifying policies of the governing and majority Burmans. And Ne Win's own continuing undisguised contempt for democratic political institutions reflects his belief that Burmese imitations of such institutions led in the years 1948–1962

to unnecessary divisions that tempted foreign intervention.

### END OF DEMOCRATIC POLITICS

When General Ne Win seized power from constitutionally chosen Premier U Nu in March, 1962, he immediately terminated the two-chamber national Parliament, threw out the 15-year-old democratic constitution, and even eliminated the High and Supreme Courts. After an unsuccessful attempt to gain the support of the ousted civilian politicians on his own terms he banned all political parties except the officially created and supported Burma Socialist Program party (BSPP).

The proclaimed purpose of the 1962 military takeover was the alleged willingness of Prime Minister Nu to acquiesce in the secession of the important Shan minority from the then federal Burmese union.<sup>1</sup> Unquestionably, Ne Win and some other soldiers feared that civilian mismanagement of the state's affairs, as they perceived it, would lead to national disintegration and probably to foreign intervention (after the much-feared examples of Vietnam and Laos). Ne Win himself, a xenophobic nationalist, wanted to eliminate the reminders of past Burmese subordination to British rule represented by legislative, judicial and administrative institutions patterned on the British.<sup>2</sup>

The intensity of Ne Win's anti-foreign feelings, which did not really surface in the earlier caretaker regime he headed (in 1958–1960), first expressed itself economically. Foreign-influenced old economic institutions were overthrown. Banks were nationalized; wholesale and most retail trade was taken over by the government; and the previously dominant Indian and Chinese commercial minorities were effectively denied a means of earning a living (many of them left the country). The place of the old economic institutions was to be taken by the "Burmese Way to Socialism"—the ideological basis of which was proclaimed in

<sup>1</sup> Nu denies the Ne Win government's allegation to this effect, and there is no evidence to support the charge. In 1972, in fact, Nu quit the leadership of the United National Liberation Front because of his opposition to the right of secession demanded by his ethnic minority allies in the Front. As Nu's biographer, the author has met with him several times since his flight from Burma in 1969.

<sup>2</sup> An official account of how and why Ne Win seized power in 1962 is to be found in "Power to the R.C.," *Ten Years of Social Revolution*, a supplement to *The Working People's Daily*, March 2, 1962. See also the author's *U Nu of Burma* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1969).

1962 in one of the first major documents issued by the new soldier-politicians.<sup>3</sup>

General Ne Win was less sure at the start, however, how the country should be organized politically, except that the debate which characterized democratic institutions belonged to history. Whether the general really expected the cooperation of the formerly ruling civilian politicians is open to question, but he did seem, unsuccessfully, to seek their support. And he sought the support of ethnic minority and Communist insurgent leaders for the new Burmese unity he hoped to shape—also unsuccessfully.

### BUILDING THE NEW ORDER

Whatever General Ne Win may have expected by way of civilian or insurgent support, he had to govern a land that had been in a state of partial political disintegration virtually from the start of independence. As early as May, 1962, accordingly, a Central Security and Administration Committee (SAC) was established, and subordinate SAC's were set up in the states, divisions, districts, townships and villages.<sup>4</sup> The military dominated the whole SAC set-up—as it did the Ne Win-headed Revolutionary Council at the apex of Burma's refashioned government, largely because the soldiers did not believe that they could trust most civilians.

The Burma Socialist Program party (BSPP), also created in mid-1962, was no less soldier-constituted.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, even nine years later, more than half its full members were military personnel. The first national congress of the party was not held until 1971,<sup>6</sup> primarily because it took the largely military cadres a long time to recruit loyal civilian supporters of the new political order. Delegates to the first congress were elected, however, in early 1971 (as were members of previously appointed township committees). Power, Ne Win told delegates to the party conference, was being transferred "as from today to our party, which represents a good part of the people of Burma."

<sup>3</sup> See *The Burmese Way to Socialism*, Rangoon, April 30, 1962.

<sup>4</sup> Burma Socialist Program party (BSPP) *Bulletin*, No. 6, June, 1971, p. 42.

<sup>5</sup> For an official account of the history of the BSPP, see "Keeping Pace With History," *Ten Years of Social Revolution*, a supplement to the *Working People's Daily*, March 2, 1972.

<sup>6</sup> For the government's own attempt to explain the rationale of the party, see *The System of Correlation of Man and His Environment: The Philosophy of the Burma Socialist Programme Party* (Rangoon, 1963). Also interesting is *The Constitution of the Burma Socialist Programme Party* (Rangoon, 1962).

<sup>7</sup> The history of the Peasants' Council is to be found in "Making History at Ohndaw," *Ten Years of Social Revolution*, a supplement to the *Working People's Daily*, March 2, 1972.

<sup>8</sup> The evolution of the Workers' Council is described in "Unifying the Working Class," in *ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> See M. C. Tun, "Sudden Death of a Dragon," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, April 1, 1972.

The effort to build a national network of peasants' and workers' councils, each with its own central directing organization, began within the first year of General Ne Win's initially heavy-handed rule. The first "peasants' seminar" was held in 1963, a Peasants' Affairs Division of the BSPP was established in 1966, and a Central Peasants' Council came into being in 1969. By 1968, according to the government, there were 6,105 "primary level" peasants' councils and 134 township councils. Colonel Thaung Kyi, who headed the Peasants' Affairs Division of the BSPP when it was created in 1966, was selected in 1969 to be chairman of the Central Peasants' Council.<sup>7</sup>

Development of a similar network of workers' councils began in 1963, and the first meeting of the Central Workers' Council took place five years later, in 1968. By 1969, 2,400 "primary level" councils and 180 township councils had been established. The head of the executive committee of the Central Workers' Council, as in the case of the peasants' organization, was a prominent military figure, Colonel Maung Shwe.<sup>8</sup>

### END OF TRANSITION ERA?

General Ne Win caused some surprise at the BSPP congress in mid-1971 when he promised that a new constitution would soon replace the British-influenced constitution he had overthrown in 1962. But he caused no surprise at all when, having decided that Burma should have a new basic law, he appointed his right-hand man and heir-apparent, then Brigadier San Yu, to head the constitution-drafting commission. This was, in fact, Ne Win's second attempt at constitution-creating for his country, the first having misfired in 1968–1969 when the old civilian politicians brought together as a National Unity Advisory Board recommended a return to parliamentary democracy. It was after Ne Win's rejection of this recommendation that ex-Premier Nu, a member of the board, fled from Burma and launched his unsuccessful campaign for the restoration of democracy in Burma from abroad.

The 1971 pledge of a new constitution was followed in 1972 by a series of confirming and supporting political moves seemingly designed to lay the groundwork for the new political order that would follow the aging and ailing Ne Win's retirement from active political leadership. Reflecting the persisting Burmese drive for renewal, a decree in March, 1972, ended the once powerful political institutions of the central administrative "Secretariat" at the national level of government and of the district commissioner at a hitherto key local level of government.<sup>9</sup> Both institutions, developed to serve the limited needs of British colonial governance in a bygone era, had probably outlived their usefulness. But they were also a reminder of past British rule, and they had to go for this reason, too—as Burma's leadership sought to renew the coun-



try politically through more appropriate governing arrangements.

Not only was the office of the once nearly all-powerful district commissioner abolished but so was the district itself, as a unit of administration. The district was to be succeeded at the village, township and division levels of administration by expanded Security and Administrative Committees—created in 1962 as one of the first moves in new political institution-building by General Ne Win.<sup>10</sup> Comprising representatives from the armed forces, police, BSPP, civil service, and workers' and peasants' councils, the SAC's were to have expanded responsibilities as the new chief local governing institutions. Indications in late 1972 were that their membership would be at least partly elected in the future.

As for the old "Secretariat," it was probably somewhat of a political anachronism even in its heyday, when the British colonials sought to maintain sufficient order in the country to go about their business of doing business, and collecting just enough revenue to support the colonial presence. The Secretariat brought together the permanent secretaries of the different ministries in a single structure that directed the administration of the country. Ne Win's March, 1972, reform decree put the secretaries and their deputies in the various government departments and other bodies, giving ministers easier access to those responsible for carrying out policy.

This "administrative revolution," as the government called it, was followed a month later by General Ne Win's surprise resignation of his military rank to become Burma's first "civilian" leader in a decade. Twenty of the general's top aides followed his lead, thus apparently signalling that Burma should henceforth be a "civilian-ruled" state.<sup>11</sup> This, in turn, was followed by the announcement on April 22 of a new draft constitution for a "Socialist Republic of Burma" with one political party (the BSPP) and an elected, single-chamber People's Congress of 600 delegates. After additional minor changes,<sup>12</sup> the proposed basic law was expected to come into effect in 1974, with elections expected the same or the following year. The new government and supporting political process would most resemble the ruling arrangements of various East European countries and, to a lesser

extent, those of the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China.

Not content to give Burma new political and administrative arrangements, U (formerly General) Ne Win instituted a "judicial revolution" in August, 1972. A "people's judicial system" was proclaimed, replacing what was left of the old legal structure. Laymen, rather than lawyers, would henceforth serve as judges on a rotational basis in new "people's courts" (aided, for a while at least, by former judges and magistrates as "advisers"). BSPP personnel and members of the workers' and peasants' councils would select the lay judges, whose role was likened to the traditional role of parents in settling conflicts within the Burmese family.<sup>13</sup>

### SURVIVAL AND RENEWAL

The two drives of survival and renewal can be seen in the series of political building moves made by Ne Win since his takeover in 1962, and the shape of the structure he has sought to construct has become increasingly clearer in the last two years.<sup>14</sup> There can be little doubt that the Burmese general-turned-civilian desires a political order that minimizes divisions over policy or ideology, or between the majority Burmans and the country's other ethnic communities (like the Shans, Karens or Kachins). Noticeably absent from the new constitution is anything resembling the old Chamber of Nationalities, the second house in the pre-1962 coup days, which probably encouraged the ethnic minorities to continue to think of themselves as separate from the majority. And there will, of course, be no right of secession for anybody (as there used to be for the Shans in the old constitution).

The one political luxury which Burma cannot afford is further political division. Some members of all five chief minorities remain in rebellion against the government, as do Peking-aided Communist insurgents along the long northern border with China. Ex-Premier U Nu, whose Thailand-based opposition to Ne Win never really got off the ground, is no longer a significant force in Burmese politics—but Thai soil remains the base of several continuing operations by Burmese exile elements against the Rangoon government. Divisions undoubtedly exist within the armed forces, and there will surely be a succession struggle when Ne Win steps aside politically—which he could do dramatically before or after the "elections" in 1974 or 1975.

The object of the new constitution and some of the new administrative arrangements is to contain divisiveness to ensure Burma's survival as an independent country. Political parties in the old days divided both the politicians and the people (to the advantage of all the insurgents), so there will be only one party. There will also be only one legislative chamber—none of whose members will be selected because of his ethnic

<sup>10</sup> For a treatment of the evolution of the SAC's, see *The Guardian* (Rangoon), April, 1972, pp. 4–5.

<sup>11</sup> See M. C. Tun, "A Civilian Face," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, May 27, 1972.

<sup>12</sup> For a description of the fairly extensive mass consultation process, see Alan Castro, "Light as Well as Shadows Along the Burmese Road to Socialism," *The Asian* (Hong-kong), September 3, 1972.

<sup>13</sup> M. C. Tun, "Dads and Moms," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, August 19, 1972.

<sup>14</sup> For an interesting analysis, see T. D. Allman, "Burma Moves Haltingly Toward Constitutional Reform," *Dispatch News Service International Bi-Weekly Asian Release*, January 10, 1972, pp. 7–8.

status. The Security and Administrative Committees—on the local and national levels of government alike—will represent all the politically eligible groups in the country. And the military's participation in the SAC's—as well as in the leadership of the BSPP (headed by Deputy Premier and newly made General San Yu) and the Workers' and Peasants' Councils—will allow it to continue to control the country's political life. Not again, as Ne Win sees it, will divisiveness bring the country to the brink of a break-up—if it can be avoided.

Burma's greatest political fear as the country nears the twenty-fifth anniversary of its renewed independence in 1973 is of becoming a divided state—like Vietnam, Laos and, more recently, once comparatively tranquil Cambodia. Ne Win is reportedly encouraged by steps taken in 1972 by the two Koreas to narrow the differences between them and by the possibility of early progress in starting to put “divided” China back together again (through some limited accommodation between Peking and Taipei). But the Burmese leader is also apprehensive in light of the manner in which Pakistan came apart and the new neighboring state of Bangladesh came into being in 1971. The Rangoon government moved swiftly in 1972 to stabilize relations with the new state of Bangladesh—which it recognized despite China's policy not to do so—for both internal and external reasons. There is fear in the Burmese capital that the example of Bangladesh will not be lost on some dissident elements in Burma.

The drive for survival, however, only partly explains why Burmese leader Ne Win, apparently fully supported by at least the second echelon of the armed forces leadership, has acted as he has politically. The ex-general fears the consequences of divisive democratic policies, but he also wants popular participation in the political life of the country. The BSPP and the Workers' and Peasants' Councils are designed to draw the whole people of the land into the task of renewing Burma as a proud and self-supporting nation. The new “people's courts” also reflect the leadership's view that the Burmese people themselves can best directly solve their own problems—not least of all those that required professional adjudication in British colonial times.

Economically, Ne Win has tried to do the same thing, but with practically no success. Of the two

problems, political integration and economic development, the latter would seem to be by far the easier for Burma to solve. The country is, after all, one of the richest in comparatively wealthy Southeast Asia, in terms of natural resources, soils and such. Before World War II, Burma was the world's ranking exporter of rice and the largest producer of petroleum between Iran to the west and the American west coast in the other direction. The agricultural conquest and settlement of lower Burma under British rule was one of the great success stories of rapid economic change in the area. Burmese education, moreover, is good, if not outstanding, education. And the Burmese peasant is a hard-working farmer.

General Ne Win calls his country a “socialist democracy,” and it has very much become overtly socialist since he seized power from U Nu and the other elected civilian leaders a decade ago.<sup>15</sup> Government statistics suggest genuine progress under the new economic arrangements—such as the claimed doubling of direct government investment in the economy in the decade 1962–1972.<sup>16</sup> The value of industrial output is also said to have doubled in the same decade, increasing from 3,590 million kyats annually to 6,190 million annually.

But the standard of living has visibly declined—sharply, indeed, for most residents of Rangoon and the country's other cities and towns in particular. Once plentiful items of common usage are no longer to be found in the empty and inefficient retail outlets. Inflation has taken its sad toll in the years since 1962. And Burma's foreign exchange reserves have dropped to a dangerous level (\$50 million in 1971 compared with \$214 million in 1964), as the market for Burma's limited range of exports has declined and the terms of trade have gone against it.

Spokesmen for the government<sup>17</sup> claim that progress has been made and that the groundwork has been laid for even greater accomplishments in the years ahead. The economy has been reclaimed from foreign control, mainly Indian and Chinese minority communities within the country, and the Burmese are being trained for economic roles denied them in colonial times and during the first 14 years of independence. It is probably true that education in Burma today is more “equated with livelihood,” as the government puts it, and that growing numbers of Burmese are being trained for various roles in the almost completely state-dominated “overt economy.” But, meanwhile, this economy stagnates while population grows (about 50 per cent since World War II) and there is food-rationing in one of the once wealthiest agricultural lands in Asia.

As a result of the state of the economy, its continued mismanagement<sup>18</sup> and the lack of sufficient incentives for the peasantry to produce more, there are today two Burmese economies and, apparently,

<sup>15</sup> Excellent sources of economic data for Burma are the *Annual Reports to the People by the Union of Burma Revolutionary Council on the Revolutionary Government's Budget Estimates*.

<sup>16</sup> “Food, Clothing, & Shelter,” *Ten Years of Social Revolution*, supplement to the *Working People's Daily*, March 2, 1972.

<sup>17</sup> See U Htin Fatt, “A Decade of Economic Revolution,” in the *Decade of Socialism*, supplement to *The Guardian* (Rangoon), March 2, 1972.

<sup>18</sup> For an example of mismanagement in the form of undistributed consumer goods, see M. C. Tun, “Letter from Rangoon,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, July 29, 1972.

two competing types of foreign trade. Burma's overtly socialist economy is paralleled, at least in some respects, by a growing if expensive and exploitative black market economy,<sup>19</sup> which actually exports to the world beyond Burma by means of land-routes into neighboring Thailand.

There are many reasons for Burma's continuing economic failures: the persisting insurgencies (which divert precious human and material resources), the limited preparation the Burmese received under British colonialism to direct their own economy, and the twentieth century stranglehold of Indian and Chinese minority communities on the commercial life of the country. But the fact remains that there was economic progress before Ne Win took over in 1962, in spite of these factors. The post-1962 military leaders of Burma bit off more than they could chew in terms of economic responsibilities, and their countrymen—if not themselves—have suffered as a result.

Their reasons for taking strong—and even rash—actions to reclaim the economy from foreign elements derive from the drives for survival and renewal. Burma has severely limited all foreign participation in her economy<sup>20</sup> for fear of losing her economic independence and possibly, as a result, her political freedom too. And the "Burmese Way of Socialism" has been promoted by the Ne Win government as a means of renewing Burma as a land of "sufficiency" for all and, consequently, as a country in which attention can be given to cultural and other types of national renewal.

#### FOREIGN POLICY

The potential external danger to Burma has grown through the years since independence. The Burmese recognized the People's Republic of China as early as December, 1949, not because they sympathized with the Chinese Communists, but as a defensive political move. Through the years, however, Chinese support of Burmese insurrectionary activity has increased, despite the fact that Burma has the most genuinely neutral foreign policy to be found anywhere in Asia.

The division of Vietnam after 1954, the subsequent wars in Vietnam and Laos (which borders Burma), the spread of the Vietnam conflict to once-neutral Cambodia, and the growing involvement in the Indochina conflict of Thailand (another neighbor) heightened the threat to Burma, as the country's leadership

perceived it. There were fears, especially in the middle years of the 1960's, that Burma would somehow become engulfed in a spilling-over of the Indochina war—primarily as a result of Thai involvement in that conflict.

Burma's fears, accordingly, were of a threat from the east as an extension of the Indochina war and, also, from the north in the form of increased intervention by China in Burmese affairs through enlarged support by Peking of various insurrectionary groups. It was with no little surprise, accordingly, that Ne Win found himself confronted in 1971 with a quite different kind of threat from a third direction. The war between the two parts of Pakistan that resulted in the emergence of the state of Bangladesh created a new and possibly greater threat to continued Burmese independence.

The Burmese found themselves almost overnight in 1971 and 1972 in the near-territorial center of a new strategic face-down involving China, the U.S.S.R. and hitherto friendly India.<sup>21</sup> The Ne Win government desires friendly relations with all three of these powers, but it may well be that Peking, Moscow and Delhi will not let the Burmese go their preferred nonaligned way. For the time being, the different foreign influences largely cancel one another out, but this may not always be the case.

This heightened foreign threat is by no means unrelated to the political changes that have taken place within the country in the last couple of years, particularly in 1972, and those promised for the period immediately ahead. The external danger is greater—which means that internal unity must be greater—as Ne Win sees it. The new political and administrative arrangements are partly designed to strengthen the country in a period of new danger.

There will also be little opportunity for renewal if the country is divided as a consequence of a new "cold war"—involving the Chinese, Soviets and Indians.

The drives for survival and renewal may, indeed, be stronger in 1972 than they have been at any time since independence returned to Burma nearly a quarter of a century ago. They explain, in large measure, both the country's political and economic development and its foreign policy under Ne Win. They are persistent forces, but whether they are sufficient to the task remains to be seen.

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<sup>19</sup> For a description, see Jack Foisie's dispatch, "Burma Easing Its Isolation," *Washington Post*, August 13, 1972.

<sup>20</sup> Despite this fact, Japan and West Germany have steadily increased their aid contributions to the Ne Win government. See, for example, S. C. Banerji, "Burma's Shot-in-the-Arm," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, March 18, 1972.

<sup>21</sup> Burmese fears about the impact of this rivalry upon Burma are extremely well described by Tilman Durdin in his dispatch, "Big-Power Duel Worries Burma," *The New York Times*, February 14, 1972.

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*"For her own success, Indonesia must have the protection of neutrality; and the government of Suharto must devote itself to this goal. . . . The surest political fact in Southeast Asia, from the Philippines around to Burma, is that these newly organized and reorganized nations seek above all to evolve, within their own societies, indigenous forms of government and an indigenously constructed and applied political theory."*

## The Outward Reach of Indonesia

BY L. EDWARD SHUCK, JR.

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TO AN INDONESIAN, revolution is rebellion against foreign control and resistance to "imperialism." Ongoing nationalist revolution is a strong element in foreign policy. The answer to imperialism—and to "neo-colonialism"—is nationalism.

Indonesian politics is inward-looking. Its goal is an ever more healthy national consciousness. For President Sukarno, the fuel of the action was overstimulated emotion. President Suharto is acting more prosaically—his first priority is the improvement of economic and social conditions. The search continues, meanwhile, for a process of decision-making indigenous and familiar to Malay experience. Structures of government have been sought through which a small elite of sophisticated conspirators against the Dutch—the generation of 1945—can contain the expectations and channel the energies of the mass of diverse peoples within the Indonesian archipelago. This population is only slowly becoming cohesive. It does not yet possess an institutional structure which can assure freedom from foreign domination and a reasonable degree of economic security.

In spite of the events of the GESTAPU<sup>1</sup> (an acronym for the *coup* and *countercoup* of October 1, 1965, and its aftermath) the fundamental goals of Indonesian foreign policy remain the same. However,

differing techniques, styles and even postures have been evident in the Guided Democracy of Sukarno and the New Order of Suharto.

Americans are trained to react to events in Southeast Asia within the ethos of a real or imagined Marxist/anti-Marxist competition. American leadership seldom reflects an understanding of Southeast Asian nationalism or of authentic Southeast Asian desires for nonalignment in the gigantic interaction of superpower ambitions, preferring to view events as charades dictated by Russians, Chinese—and Americans. These battles between virtue and evil have been waged by characters responding to their manipulators. As in ancient Ramayana tales told in Javanese and Balinese wayang and dance, the familiar and kindly characters whom we support have been defending themselves and us from personifications of evil—from characters whom Americans regard as dolls in the hands of Russian and Chinese puppeteers.

During his long period of dominance within the coterie of leaders ruling Indonesia, Sukarno concentrated on stimulating a sense of nationhood, and on reconciling and harnessing what he termed the three ideological expressions of Indonesian culture—religious belief, nationalism (independence uncontrolled from abroad), and Marhaenism (in a word or two, *Indonesianized* Marxism). Sukarno also wanted the Indonesian state to express the five principles of governance, the *Pantja Sila*.<sup>2</sup> Internationally, Bung Karno (Sukarno) committed himself to the care and feeding of a third force, one nonaligned in the global contest of anti-Marxism/Marxism, while at the same time he was eager to fight the dragon of neocolonialism.

In foreign relations, between 1962 and 1969, the armed forces were committed to Sukarno's major moves in Southeast Asia: the *tour de force* in West Irian, and the Confrontation with Malaysia. In 1962,

<sup>1</sup> For an excellent, detailed analysis of GESTAPU, including a review of extant literature, one should consult Donald E. Weatherbee, "The Interpretation of GESTAPU," *World Affairs*, Vol. 132, No. 4 (March, 1970).

<sup>2</sup> According to Sukarno these are: nationalism, humanism, democracy, social well-being, and faith in God. An excellent explanation of these rallying symbols for Indonesia can be found in Sukarno's own explanation, available in Republic of Indonesia, Ministry of Information, *The Birth of Pantjasila* (a speech given by Sukarno on June 1, 1945, to the Investigating Committee for the Preparation of Independence, convened with assistance of the Japanese to prepare for Indonesian independence, 2d Edition, Djakarta, 1952).



after 15 years of argument about West Irian's legal and proper relationship to Indonesia, the Indonesians seized key garrison spots in the area from the increasingly disinterested Dutch. Intervention by the United Nations provided for nominal supervision by that body, to be ended in 1969 by means of an "Act of Free Choice." This would have permitted the inhabitants to opt for permanent Indonesian control or, presumably, for some form of independence protected by the United Nations. In 1963, denouncing the formation of Malaysia as lingering British colonialism and a consequent threat to Indonesia, Sukarno mounted an invasion of Sabah and Sarawak and ordered raids against the peninsula. The latter were obviously designed to incite to revolt some West Malaysian Malays, many of whom are of recent Javanese and Sumatran origin. There is little real doubt that Sukarno coveted Sabah and Sarawak for eventual incorporation into Indonesian Kalimantan (Borneo). In January, 1965, Indonesia withdrew from the United Nations when the Assembly elected Malaysia to the Security Council.

The Sukarno regime handled economics in a slipshod manner while pushing the prestige of Indonesia as the champion of the NEFOS (New Emerging Forces) in their various contests with Western-oriented "neo-colonial" ventures, led by the United States and the United Kingdom. Sukarno played the United States and the U.S.S.R. against one another for financial aid, aid usually invested in showy stadiums and military artifacts, or simply dissipated in administrative ineptness. From the Belgrade conference of nonaligned governments in 1961 through Confrontation, withdrawal from the United Nations, and increased friendship for the People's Republic of China, Sukarno found the middle ground of neutrality and nonalignment narrow and shrinking. The ground between pro-Americanism and positive anti-Americanism was not wide enough to operate free of massive frustration for the Indonesians as well as for their suitors in both camps.

Sukarno tottered on the threshold of greatness, but never entered the pantheon. His undoing, and the near undoing of the nation-state which he had done so much to define and energize over a 40-year span of time, resulted from his inability to solve fundamental economic and administrative problems.

#### **GESTAPU**

GESTAPU revealed that after 20 years in his exalted role as Great Leader of the Revolution, Sukarno could no longer hold together the competing

elements of Indonesian power in peace and reasonable security. He had to give way to the most dominant personality in the military, Army Chief of Staff Suharto. Ruling simply in the name of the armed forces for a time, Suharto was made Acting President in 1967 and President for a five-year term in 1968, as designated by the People's Consultative Committee. In addition to replacing Sukarno with Suharto, GESTAPU resulted in the fragmenting and outlawing of the Indonesian Communist party (PKI) with the slaughter of perhaps a quarter of a million alleged Communists. In each generation of this century, 1926, 1948 and 1965, the PKI has been broken by its own impatience and by popular apprehension about the party's foreign connections, and by concern for its suspected anti-religion bias. These events were all the result of political dialectics within Indonesia, in spite of superficial news accounts about the machinations of foreign plotters or the weight of foreign events.

#### **SUHARTO'S LEADERSHIP**

General Suharto donned the cape of Bung Karno with delicacy, and committed himself loyally to the Constitution of 1945 and the *Pantja Sila*. The increasing change in style and tempo, however, is clear.<sup>3</sup> For a time Confrontation with Malaysia was continued; and the Indonesian investment of West Irian proceeded to the conclusion Indonesia desired. The only early breakaway by Suharto was a rapidly altered policy toward the People's Republic of China, speeded by the links, actual or suspect, between the Chinese Embassy in Djakarta and the PKI. China was criticized even by hold-over Foreign Minister Ahmad Subandrio, himself a major promoter of closer relations between China and Indonesia. Anti-Chinese student demonstrations, possibly army-inspired, certainly army-permitted, continued in the weeks following the attempted coup. These were protested by China, but the pressures were sufficient for Subandrio himself to announce in December, 1965, that Indonesia was reappraising her relations with Peking. Subandrio was still in office when the Indonesian Ambassador to Peking was recalled in February, 1966. With the appointment of Adam Malik as Foreign Minister and the removal to house arrest and the eventual trial of Subandrio, relations with Peking were suspended. While substantial amounts of Chinese goods enter Indonesia, relations remained suspended in the fall of 1972. Indonesia is unhappy especially about Indonesian language broadcasts currently being beamed to Indonesia from China, and the flow of funds allegedly moving from China to PKI remnants.

The long festering uncertainties about West Irian were brought to a conclusion of sorts, along the policy lines established by Sukarno. Sporadic fighting by

<sup>3</sup> A good analysis of the causes of GESTAPU, from Suharto's point of view, was given in his "Address of State" to the "Gotong-Royong House of Representatives," August 16, 1969. Published in English translation by the Department of Information, Republic of Indonesia, 1969.

anti-Indonesian Papuans continued during the mid- and late 1960's. An enlarged Indonesian military occupation and a rigged Act of Free Choice of August, 1969, sealed West Irian incorporation into Indonesia.<sup>4</sup> Led by the Netherlands, other governments accepted the Act of Free Choice; and Indonesian sovereignty is internationally accepted since no foreign authorities seem in the mood to say nay.

In the other item of leftover business, Suharto moved to a clear break with the policy of his predecessor. After his initial support of Confrontation, in mid-1966, Suharto abruptly began to wind down the aggression, and within a year formally renounced Confrontation. The exchange of diplomatic relations with Malaysia and Singapore was celebrated in the spring of 1968.

A change in posture was clear after the first half of 1966, following the denunciation of Peking, the outlawing of the PKI, the removal of Subandrio as Foreign Minister, and the hustling of Sukarno to the sidelines. In December, 1966, Suharto addressed himself to the major bruise in Indonesia's relations with the non-Communist West when he ordered the return of foreign-owned properties which had been confiscated by Sukarno in 1964. Suharto's prolonged address to the House of Representatives of August, 1969, amounted to a comprehensive projection of the intent and the nature of the operations of the New Order. He pointed out that his foreign policy position with respect to nonalignment and Indonesia's hope to play a major role in world affairs had not changed. Nevertheless, the government's first responsibility was to strengthen Indonesia economically. With this primary concern: "Our attention at present is being concentrated on common efforts to maintain stability in our region" and to participate to the fullest in the work of ASEAN.<sup>5</sup>

The policy to shorten sail, trim the gear and tidy up the ship brought control of inflation, considerable economic and financial reform, and realism in the larger problems of foreign economic relations. There have been enlarged capital imports from the United States, Japan, and West Europe, and a moratorium in payments on the massive debt owed to the U.S.S.R. As of the end of 1970, United States investments were set at \$423 million and rising, those of Japan at \$294 million and also rising, with Japanese investment especially important because of its diversity. Japanese interests were investing in hotels, real estate, fish-

eries. American investments remained largely in petroleum.<sup>6</sup> No less than 26 per cent of Indonesian imports in 1970 came from Japan, and that figure too was rising, with the product list diversifying.

## ASEAN

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations—ASEAN—was established in 1967 when Indonesia and Singapore joined Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines (formerly joined loosely in the Association of Southeast Asia—ASA). This unity, however innocuous and wordy at its inception, indicated the possible end of Indonesia's aloofness, condescension, even hostility, toward her neighbors. The nature and intent of ASEAN, from an Indonesian standpoint, reflected a desire to work more closely with neighboring areas, with matters of common concern. No military endeavor was intended; rather, the association was an expression of the desire to mobilize economic power.

The invasion of Cambodia in the spring of 1970 seemed to sharpen international political problems and threats in Southeast Asia. In an independent action, the Indonesian government invited 21 governments in East and South Asia to confer in Djakarta about the Cambodian situation. Unfortunately, only 12 governments accepted, and none of those leaning away from the United States participated. The usefulness of the resulting joint declaration requesting that all foreign troops be withdrawn from Cambodia was therefore slight.

At the conclusion of this meeting, General Suharto visited both the United States government in Washington and the United Nations Secretary General. He appealed for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Cambodia and urged President Nixon to fight communism by encouraging nationalism rather than with arms.

The joint declaration seemed to encourage ASEAN to become more political. By the time of the annual meeting of ministers in November, 1971, the Kuala Lumpur Declaration was ready for the prevailing mood. It requested that Southeast Asia be recognized as a neutral zone and that its governments jointly organize their mutual relations in terms of "the neutrality principle." Southeast Asia, in the language of the Kuala Lumpur Declaration, should be respected as a "zone of peace, freedom, neutrality, free from any form or manner of interference from outside sources."<sup>7</sup> Each of the ASEAN ministerial meetings since has reiterated the importance of neutrality for Southeast Asia.

The interdependence of economic and political power and policy was frequently ignored by the flamboyant, presuming Sukarno, with his chip-on-the-shoulder diplomacy. In the Suharto New Order, nothing is more encouraging to the future of South-

<sup>4</sup> Note report in *The New York Times*, May 7, 1969. For a very comprehensive analysis of the Irian problem with special reviews of recent literature in the field, see Justus M. van der Kroef, "Indonesia and West New Guinea," *Orbis*, Summer, 1970 (Vol. 14, No. 2), pp. 366ff.

<sup>5</sup> Address of State, *op. cit.*, esp. pp. 49–58. Quote from p. 52.

<sup>6</sup> *Far Eastern Economic Review*, May 10, 1972.

<sup>7</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Malaysia, *Malaysian Digest*, November 30, 1971.

east Asian development than the activities and leadership of Indonesia's outstanding economist, Sumitro Djojohadikusmo, currently Minister of Trade. Recognizing the grave shortcomings and managerial faults of the economies of the Southeast Asian countries, Sumitro has concentrated not only on refurbishing Indonesia's productive and distribution systems and her relations with capital sources abroad, but also on developing a sophisticated economic doctrine for Southeast Asia as a unit. He holds that the area should not mount some quixotic effort at intra-regional independence through the common market route, but should work together and bargain collectively for marketing positions overseas.<sup>8</sup> This is the logical requirement of a group which offers a narrow range of exports and whose members are helplessly dependent upon foreign imports of consumer goods and capital. Such collective bargaining, of course, complements Indonesia's political aim, since it requires strict neutrality in a multipolar international power structure.

A significant contribution of the April, 1972, ministerial meeting of ASEAN, held in Singapore, was the creation of a special coordinating committee for outside trade relations, a committee chaired by Sumitro. As a product of this initiative, Sumitro arranged a joint meeting of his group with the European Economic Community in Brussels during mid-June, 1972, to stimulate European-Southeast Asian economic cooperation. From the June meeting grew the permanent ASEAN-Brussels Committee to maintain continuous contact between the two organizations—and obviously to further the marketing hopes of both. During 1972, Sumitro also negotiated with the Americans and the Japanese, and reportedly has plans for strengthening ASEAN relations with the U.S.S.R. and with COMECON.<sup>9</sup>

Outside the framework of ASEAN, Indonesia has been active in the self-identified Non-Aligned Group. This includes governments, presumably, of 55 states; prominent among them are Yugoslavia, Egypt, Indonesia, Malaysia, Ethiopia, India, Tanzania, Algeria and Ghana. These governments, in an effort to concentrate some type of power in an organizational format, have met on three occasions in 1972: in February, in Guyana, at Kuala Lumpur, in May, and again, in Guyana, in August.<sup>10</sup> The shadow of future

difficulties for the "neutral but leaning" states darkened the Georgetown meeting in August, when Malaysia withdrew from the meeting as the Provisional Government of the Republic of South Vietnam (NLF) was seated by majority vote.

Indonesian foreign policy has gained both a new balance and a new self-confidence during the New Order. There is a consistency in Indonesia's search for communicating links with all the world's power blocs. This will require a bit of tightrope-walking. Foreign economic investments and a variety of foreign markets, both governmental and private, are indispensable to economic and social change within Indonesia. Treating China with reserve and depending largely on the United States, Japan, Australia and West Europe for government-to-government and private economic connections, Indonesia's governors have veered away from the political bias of the late Sukarno period.<sup>11</sup>

#### THE NEED FOR FOREIGN AID

The success of the current five year plan of economic reform, largely devoted to agriculture, food processing and mining and the improvement of the economic infrastructure of transportation and communications, depends upon constant and growing aid from overseas. Projections of the Inter Governmental Group on Indonesia, on which sit representatives of the United States, Japan, Australia and several European governments—none from the Slavic bloc or East Germany—required the largest single allotment, nearly one-third, to come from the United States. Almost that much was to be provided by Japan, and another one-third was sought from West Europe.<sup>12</sup> Following a state visit to Australia early in 1972, Suharto was assured of additional governmental and private Australian investment. In mid-1972, the U.S.S.R. sent a team to consider the feasibility of completing two large industrial projects which had been abandoned in 1965. The moratorium on debt repayment for the \$800-million worth of Russian arms continues, but no specific cancellation of the principal has been agreed upon.

General Suharto has expressed the idea that "the Indonesian people believe firmly that the strength of a nation lies mainly in the nation itself, not in foreign assistance, especially foreign military assistance."<sup>13</sup> Yet United States military aid began to flow again in 1967, and Suharto has been seeking spare parts and replacements for the Soviet military equipment purchased in the early 1960's.

All Indonesian planning requires large inputs of foreign goods and services. It would be naive to imagine that influence will not somehow follow freight and credit deliveries. Relations with the United States, with Japan, Australia, and West Germany will become increasingly significant and familiar. Despite

<sup>8</sup> See *Far Eastern Economic Review*, November 7, 1970.

<sup>9</sup> *Far Eastern Economic Review*, July 1, 1972.

<sup>10</sup> For commentary, see *Malaysian Digest*, June 15, 1972.

<sup>11</sup> See *The New York Times*, July 13, 1971, for a report on military aid from the United States.

<sup>12</sup> One good and recent source is a very perceptive speech, given in November, 1971, by Abdurrahman Gunadirdja, Minister Counselor of the Embassy of Indonesia to Washington, in Charlotte, North Carolina, published by the Embassy in 1972.

<sup>13</sup> Quote from interview report in *Far Eastern Economic Review*, October 10, 1970.



American wastage in Indochina, the American economy remains a singularly ample and available source of indispensable aid for developing areas.

To exercise the leadership in Southeast Asian affairs (and in the world) which Indonesia covets at least mildly and to which her population and resources inevitably direct her, she must attain independence and an evenness of outlook. The current one-sided dependence on sources of major capital surplus, notably the United States and Japan, and the current lopsided dependence on Japanese consumer goods have to be regarded as threats to Indonesia's independence and to her leadership among the nonaligned and those who desire to be nonaligned. At minimum, Indonesia must keep her lines of communication open to several power centers. Indonesia's leaders have always sought this goal and have been aware of its benefits.

Indonesia, furthermore, is required first to provide leadership in Southeast Asia before venturing beyond. The Southeast Asian governments as a group, linked by historical experiences and shared socio-economic peculiarities, will have to cooperate for mutual support. In this cooperation, the giant will likely become first among equals, but more equal than others. One cannot forget that over 40 per cent of the people of Southeast Asia are Indonesian citizens, and that Indonesia comprises 40 per cent of the land area of Southeast Asia. Certainly at least 40 per cent of the known actual and incipient economic strength in the region is Indonesian.

The more Indonesia seems to change the less real is the change. One must always return to the greater enigmas in Indonesian affairs. Can the society hold together, led by the emotional figment of the Constitution of 1945, with the sentiments of the *Pantja Sila*, and made to cohere, willy nilly, by the prestige and internal power and organization of the *Tentara Negara*? If this is possible, and if the Army can maintain the constitution as a unifying law against the threats of impatient extremists, it can remain the "tool of the Revolution," to quote Suharto.<sup>14</sup> Governance in Indonesia has been and is what Americans call paternalism, men ruling by consensus—among themselves. There is a subtle but real difference between the Marxist concept of the Vanguard of the People and the Indonesian Musjawarah-Musfakat (extensive exchange of views resulting in unanimous decision). The latter is authentically Javan/Sumatran, and therefore for Indonesians it is superior to any Westernized process of public decision-making which foreigners might attempt to transplant into the country. It is vital to Indonesia and to her foreign policy that her internal institutional life be indigenous and not a transplant from Europe or America.

The challenge of the late 1970's will be great. As United States financial and military guarantees for the Saigon regime, the Royal Lao government and the Lon Nol regime in the Khmer Republic fade, there will remain two benchmark regimes and two magnetic power centers for Southeast Asia. These will be the (probable) Federation of Indochina, dominated by Marxist-oriented Vietnamese, and the Republic of Indonesia, dominated by a military regime marked by apprehension of Marxism. Both will be driven to express themselves in leading their Southeast Asian neighbors. Indonesia will likely continue to be importantly funded by American and pro-American economic strength, though one cannot presume too closely about the future of Japan. Hopefully, the United States government will have the good sense to maintain contact with the Indochinese peoples, rather than continuing its strange animosity toward the peoples whose physical assets it has destroyed and whose economies it has undone.

Foreign Minister Adam Malik has stated that military alliances are unnecessary for Indonesia, since Indonesia has no external threats. He has firmly promised a continued stance of political nonalignment and has repeated his belief that financial and economic links with the West will not compromise Indonesia's political postures. One can only hope that his faith will create reality.

Nevertheless, such statements and hopes do not easily dissipate existing realities. Will the PKI be able to exert sufficient early influence, especially among working producers of export materials, to slow down Indonesian advancement and to short-circuit the policy projections of the New Order? The New Order can succeed only with a continuing inflow of Western aid. Disruptive class struggle, moreover, will prolong Indonesia's ability to feed her people, regardless of which or what force seems to win.

For her own success, Indonesia must have the protection of neutrality; and the government of Suharto must devote itself to this goal, using the aegis of the ASEAN and other possible structures. In Southeast Asia, neutralization will be a major support of nationalism and must be protected. In this light, recent moves toward neutralization by ASEAN seem to be important keys to the future politics of Southeast Asia and to the ability of Indonesian leadership. Neutralization must appear in the immediate future

(Continued on page 276)

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<sup>14</sup> *The New York Times*, October 24, 1966.



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*Writing of the civil war in Cambodia, this author points out that "sound documentation of public response to Sihanouk's deposition and the subsequent political conflict between Lon Nol's military regime and Sihanouk's government-in-exile is difficult to find, but some important documents have surfaced which provide specific evidence of the deliberate distortions of the coup regime, further insight into Pnompenh's refusal to acknowledge civil war . . . , and intriguing glimpses of peasant concerns, loyalties and organizational potential."*

## The Cambodian Civil War

BY LAURA SUMMERS

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DURING THE PAST YEAR it has become evident that the Khmer Republic government of Marshal Lon Nol in Pnompenh is on the losing side of the Cambodian war. In the two and one half years since the coup d'état deposing Chief of State Norodom Sihanouk, there has been a steady decline in the territory administered by Pnompenh matched by a steady increase in the size and military capacity of the Khmer revolutionary forces. Estimates of guerrilla strength before the 1970 coup rarely exceeded 3,000 men, while current estimates of the strength of the Khmer people's liberation army range from 30,000–50,000 men exclusive of Vietnamese advisers. In a current military offensive, the Cambodian guerrillas have demonstrated their ability to attack and to hold positions up to the defense perimeters of the city of Pnompenh. The resulting isolation of Pnompenh from the countryside has created serious

food shortages and food riots. At the present time, the city is being saved from starvation and military collapse by a daily United States airlift of 120 tons of rice rationed in lots of 5 kilos, but it is unknown how long food supplies will last, as refugees fleeing from intensified American B-52 bombing in heavily populated, guerrilla-controlled areas of Kampong Cham, Svay Rieng and Prey Veng provinces continue to stream into the city.<sup>1</sup>

Under the dual pressures of military assault and urban social tension, Lon Nol's army appears to have disintegrated. In theory a force of approximately 200,000 men, this army has not, in fact, successfully fielded a division since the catastrophic collapse of the Tchenla II operation on December 4, 1971. From a military perspective, the survival of the Khmer Republic is, at best, problematic. From a political point of view, prospects for the consolidation of a republic as presently constituted are equally grim. Tchenla II marked the turning point in the Cambodian war because it was a political as well as a military defeat for Lon Nol; it signaled the beginning of widespread public recognition of civil war.

Since the time of the coup against Sihanouk, the Pnompenh regime has dismissed all pro-Sihanouk activities and Khmer revolutionary insurgency as acts of aggression by North Vietnamese and Vietcong forces.<sup>2</sup> These accusations grew out of a pre-coup propaganda campaign to aggravate racial tensions between Khmers and Vietnamese for the dual objectives of mobilizing support for the coup and soliciting military aid from the United States under the umbrella of the Nixon Doctrine.<sup>3</sup> The conspirators realized that the removal of Sihanouk would not, in and of itself, resolve Cambodia's economic difficulties. For this reason, the army attempted to provoke Vietnamese revolutionary forces in the hope of creating a crisis situation which would

<sup>1</sup> For summaries of the current military situation see *The New York Times*, June 6, 1972; September 10, 1972, and October 23, 1972; *Newsweek*, August 14, 1972; and *Le Monde*, 28 septembre, 1972, and 8–9 octobre, 1972.

<sup>2</sup> See in particular "Vietcong-North Vietnamese Aggression Against Cambodia," "Documents on Vietcong and North Vietnamese Aggression against Cambodia (1970)," "Livre Blanc sur l'Aggression Vietcong et Nord-Vietnamienne contre la République Khmère (1970–71)," "Vietcong and North Vietnamese Aggression Against the Khmer Republic (New Documents)" all published by the Ministry of Information in Pnompenh between June, 1970, and October, 1971. See also "Message Radiodiffusé à la Nation de Monsieur le Général Lon Nol (15 août 1970)," "Address by Cambodian Ambassador Nong Kimny to the Indian Council of World Affairs, New Delhi, on 25th May 1970," and "Speech Made by the Chief of State and Delegation of the Khmer Republic to the XXVth General Assembly of the U.N.O."

<sup>3</sup> The fact that the Vietnamese issue was a lever and a pretext for the coup rather than its cause has been well-documented. One of the conspirators confided to T. D. Allman, "Frankly, Sihanouk was as anti-Communist as we were." Another said, "He had power too long. We wanted it. The only way to get at him was by attacking the Vietcong." See *Manchester Guardian*, September 6, 1971.

force the United States to the rescue with economic and military aid.<sup>4</sup> After the coup, as the army put down pro-Sihanouk revolts and retreated in front of Vietnamese forces moving out of its northeastern Cambodian bases, Lon Nol attempted to define the impending war as a religious war, imploring the Khmer people to rise up to defend the Buddha against "atheist Vietnamese Communist aggressors."

Even after Vietnamese forces had withdrawn to southern Laos in May, 1970, thousands of idealistic, nationalist young people enlisted in the army in response to these racial and religious pleas. The army grew from 20,000 to 220,000 men in less than one year, but even in the best of armies such rapid, universal recruitment generates serious problems in com-

mand. In this case, command problems were aggravated alternately by the lack of any ideological preparation for civil war and a total preoccupation with a foreign enemy defined in racial and religious terms. Soldiers fleeing to Phnompenh during the collapse of Tchenla II in December, 1971, reported they had been fighting other Khmers and these, they said, they could not kill. Recruited to defend Khmer culture, they could not in turn contribute to its destruction. An unknown number of soldiers defected to the liberation front army, acknowledging in a decisive way the depth of their emotion upon recognition of betrayal.

From that moment, the Lon Nol regime has been in serious political difficulty, difficulty which its elaborately contrived attempts at constitutionalism and party government can barely conceal. In early 1972, efforts by prominent civilian leaders in the Phnompenh government to reorder the regime's priorities in anticipation of a long civil war were apparently unsuccessful.<sup>5</sup> Lon Nol's entourage believed that American aid was essential for the survival of the regime, and great concern was evinced over the perceived reluctance of the United States to get involved in another prolonged Vietnamese-type conflict. The dilemma created by propaganda extravagances was made even greater by the presence of "true believers," whose racialism and radical nationalism prevented any recognition of an intra-national threat.

In the final analysis, it appears that the possible military advantages to be gained by a frank admission of and belated ideological preparation for civil war were outweighed by the more attractive prospects of increased American aid and military support.<sup>6</sup> In a letter to *The New York Times*, Lon Nol's Ambassador to Washington reiterated the charge of North Vietnamese and Vietcong aggression, denying the existence of civil war.<sup>7</sup> In a letter to *Le Monde*, Phnompenh's Minister of Information (now Minister of Foreign Affairs) insisted that Khmer Republic forces fought "always and uniquely" North Vietnamese and Vietcong invaders. The Minister went on to deny in equally emphatic terms that Sihanouk had any Khmer partisans. Sihanouk's regime was a dictatorship, he wrote, and the Khmer people have turned away from Sihanouk by voting in favor of a new constitution.<sup>8</sup>

These "official" views notwithstanding, the opinions and sympathies of the Khmer people have not been allowed to surface in Phnompenh. Over the summer, several private newspapers were closed by the government. The constitutional referendum cited above, executed under military supervision and surveillance, was a mockery of free democratic expression.<sup>9</sup> Sound documentation of public response to Sihanouk's deposition and the subsequent political conflict between Lon Nol's military regime and Sihanouk's govern-

<sup>4</sup> The Cambodian army began concerted harassment of Vietnamese base camps in northeastern Cambodia on January 2, 1970, in violation of treaty arrangements with the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam. By March 12, six days before the coup, the high command announced there had been 164 skirmishes between the Cambodian and Vietnamese armies in the previous 15 months, most of them between January and March, 1970. These provocations culminated in army-organized anti-Vietnamese demonstrations in the provinces and the sacking of the North Vietnamese and . . . PRG embassies in Phnompenh. Lon Nol's entourage contacted Son Ngoc Thanh in Saigon on two separate occasions in February and March seeking assurances of assistance if the Vietnamese should retaliate against Phnompenh when Sihanouk was deposed! Thanh says he relayed assurances of support to Lon Nol after seeking the approval of CIA agents who promised to do "everything possible" if the attacks materialized. Other (apparently) informal assurances of American support were received throughout late 1969 (private information). See also *U.S. Congressional Record*, October 13, 1971, pp. SI6252-4. Charles Meyer writes that the military and business elite of Phnompenh was envious of the \$200 million which the United States gave to the Vietiane regime in Laos every year. (Cambodia's total national budget expenditures for 1968, financed with special loans and other mysterious funds, were somewhat less than \$200 million.) See Meyer's *Derrière le Sourire Khmer* (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1971), pp. 286-7.

<sup>5</sup> *Le Monde*, 19 février, 1972. For Sim Var, Phnompenh's ambassador to Japan, and Son Ngoc Thanh, who became Prime Minister in the course of this period, the struggle against "anarchy" became an accepted euphemistic phrase for civil conflict. See Thanh's interview in *Realités Cambodgiennes*, 29 avril, 1972.

<sup>6</sup> American aid to Cambodia was justified at that time as insurance against the success of Vietnamization in South Vietnam under the (false) assumption that Vietnamese Communist forces would be tied down in Cambodia and prohibited from moving into the Mekong Delta to threaten Saigon. Any shift in Phnompenh's public posture would have undermined President Richard Nixon's rationale for aid to Cambodia. Ironically, President Nixon declared Cambodia the purest form of the successful working of the Nixon Doctrine eight days after Tchenla II.

<sup>7</sup> *The New York Times*, July 6, 1972.

<sup>8</sup> *Le Monde*, 8 août, 1972. Interestingly enough, this letter was an attempt to refute a series of articles on Khmer liberation front activities in the liberated zones which *Le Monde* published last April, articles which were subsequently translated and circulated in the United States in June and July. See *Indochina Chronicle*, July 1, 1972.

<sup>9</sup> *Le Monde*, 23 mai, 1972. In the absence of election lists, civil servants and military men voted two, even three times, casting ballots in all precincts where they worked or resided. Voters were given two ballots, a white one indicating "yes" or support for the constitution and a green one indicating "no" or disapproval. One ballot was to be discarded: the other was to be placed into a nearly transparent envelope. Thus, poll watchers, usually military police,

ment-in-exile is difficult to find, but some important documents have surfaced which provide specific evidence of the deliberate distortions of the coup regime, further insight into Pnompenh's refusal to acknowledge civil war even after it had become militarily obvious, and intriguing glimpses of peasant concerns, loyalties and organizational potential.

## AFTER THE COUP

Immediately following the coup on March 18, 1970, a number of revolts and demonstrations took place in both rural and urban areas of Cambodia. The foreign press characterized them as pro-Sihanouk. In Pnompenh, officials explained that Sihanouk had a few partisans who had been temporarily duped by Vietnamese agitators. An official Ministry of Information document describing some demonstrations in Kampong Cham (in which two National Assembly deputies were assassinated and peasants organized a march on Pnompenh) passes over the incidents in a deceptively cursory manner.

March 26: In Kompong Cham, demonstrators pillaged the law-courts, sacked the Governor's mansion, and organized a march on Pnompenh. They were intercepted by the armed forces.

March 27: Demonstrators again entered Kompong Cham; the army was forced to open fire, and there were some killed.

A second wave tried to reach the capital by two different routes; the defence forces dispersed them without difficulty. Other demonstrations organized in Takeo province were also quelled by the Army.

On the 26th, two deputies, Mr. Kim Phon and Mr. Sos Saoun, who were trying to bring the rioters to reason, were massacred.

The authorities announced the arrest of the Vietnamese nationals who controlled the demonstrations and said that they were in possession of all the proofs of the participation of Vietcong agents in the organization of the riots.<sup>10</sup>

The language used here very conspicuously converts an apparently large number of Cambodian citizens into a mass of depersonalized "demonstrators" or "rioters" who were "dispersed" and "quelled" by the army, and immediately calls attention to the omission or obfuscation of (1) the number and nationality of these people, and (2) the reasons behind the demon-

strations, assassinations and aborted march on Pnompenh. Was there any organization or reason involved in this chaotic, seemingly inhuman behavior? If so, was it really Vietnamese-inspired? Internal government communiqués describing the same incidents suggest another scenario.

On March 25, 1970, the Provincial Governor of Kampong Cham sent an urgent message to General Sirik Matak, then Minister of Interior, reporting that *residents* of the commune of Kampong Reap had mobilized 1,500 people for a demonstration in front of district headquarters. He wrote:

They are armed, some of them, with knives, machetes and swords.

- (1) They are requesting the authorities (or the government) to rehang the portraits of Prince Sihanouk.
- (2) They demand that Prince Sihanouk be allowed to return to Cambodia to have it out with the government.
- (3) They are asking for the dissolution of the National Assembly.<sup>11</sup>

After recording these specific requests and testifying to the peaceful departure of the petitioners when they had been assured that their requests would be transmitted to higher authorities, the governor writes with undisguised incredulity: "I will multiply our efforts in the investigation of the real motive of this demonstration." He mentions plans to explain the coup situation in Pnompenh to the people on April 6, days later.

## ANOTHER DEMONSTRATION

The following day another urgent message was dispatched to the Minister of Interior, reporting the resumption of the demonstration. The governor spoke with his constituents for an hour and a half and identified their leaders as being the same individuals responsible for the confrontation on the previous day. He did not identify these spokesmen as Vietnamese or Vietnamese nationals. Consequently, and especially in the anti-Vietnamese context of the period, it is safe to assume that the leaders of and most of the participants in this movement were local Khmer residents.<sup>12</sup> This is also implicit in the initial, reasonably gentle military handling of the situation by local administrators. The governor wrote:

... At the end of an hour and a half of negotiations, we were completely outflanked by the demonstrators who were moving toward the center of town. We should have taken measures before then to prevent their movement toward the town, but I had noticed old people, above all women, and children among the demonstrators. For that reason I insisted the armed forces not use guns. In another context, we only had a force of 200 to 250 army, police and provincial guardsmen. Very much aware of the seriousness of any action on our part, we simply followed the demonstration across town in order to avoid disorders.<sup>13</sup>

could easily see the green ballot if it were being deposited in the ballot box. In one precinct, those who had voted "no" were asked to give their name, profession and address before leaving. Many people indicated their fear of voting "no." Many younger citizens refused to participate because the army had just ended a long student strike by attacking the Law Faculty and killing several students.

<sup>10</sup> Cambodia: March 1970 (Pnompenh: Ministry of Information, n.d.), pp 22-3 (in English).

<sup>11</sup> Communiqué N° 65. Salakhet de Kompong Cham, 25 mars, 1970.

<sup>12</sup> In fact, there is no reference to Vietnamese organization of or participation in these demonstrations in the documents in my possession.

<sup>13</sup> Communiqué N° 66. Salakhet de Kompong Cham, 26 mars, 1970.



Once again, the demonstration ended peacefully, but while the governor was telephoning this news to Pnompenh, other groups of demonstrators from Tonlebet, Chamcar Loeu and Choeung-Prey were sacking the provincial courthouse and the governor's mansion.<sup>14</sup>

On the same afternoon, an official delegation from Pnompenh, including General In Tam, President of the National Assembly and deputy from Kampong Cham province, arrived (at 2:15 P.M.) to negotiate with the demonstrators. Groups of demonstrators were standing around the local textile factory and at the town gate. Seeing the extent of the damage to the provincial courthouse and capitol buildings, the delegation returned at once to Pnompenh, deciding that the situation had passed the point of discussion. During this time, crowds were spreading all across the town. The governor's mansion was sacked a second time.

The arrival of the two National Assembly deputies, Sos Saoun and Kim Phon, at about 6 P.M. was unexpected, indicating that they were not part of any official delegation sent by the government. They arrived by taxi just as the demonstrators were about to board trucks taking them to Pnompenh. The demonstrators took the deputies to the textile factory and killed them "for a reason which I have not yet been able to obtain," the governor wrote. Without any reference to arrests for either the assassinations or inciting to riot, the communiqué ends abruptly with the following postscript:

Permit me to inform your highness that this morning while we were occupied in the town of Kampong Cham, another group of about 1,500 demonstrators came to sack the administrative post of Tuol-Trach (Oraeng-Auv).

The results were fear and anxiety for our personnel. Only two venetian blinds were broken; the demonstrators were content to hang a portrait of Samdech Sihanouk in the post.<sup>15</sup>

An estimated 8,000–10,000 peasants and villagers from several provinces joined the march to Pnompenh. They carried Sihanouk's portrait on the highways. The army, moving out from Pnompenh, fired on the demonstrators and on villages along two demonstration routes. According to French observers, there were scores of dead.<sup>16</sup> The governor of Kampong Cham was abruptly dismissed, and In Tam took over his provincial administration. Immediately thereafter, Vietnamese nationals were accused of having organized the demonstrations; mass arrests and deten-

tion of Vietnamese nationals began. Several days after the aborted march, Vietcong forces in Svay Rieng province initiated a series of raids against the Cambodian army partly to secure their border sanctuaries from encroaching American and South Vietnamese army attacks from Vietnam but also to signal their support for the movement behind Sihanouk. The Cambodian army faded back to Pnompenh, abandoning a series of district towns without a major battle.

There are several striking elements in the demands and behavior of the Khmer demonstrations, especially in the early stages of the uprising. Above all, one is struck by a certain discipline and unity of purpose manifested by the relatively peaceful conduct of large numbers of individuals in a crowd situation, their ability to articulate precise demands and the presence of recognizable spokesmen. The fact that the peasants sought to negotiate with the authority structure in place distinguishes this movement from more traditional messianic uprisings. In this regard, it is significant that only some 10,000 people marched. (Cambodia's total population is about 8 million.) It appears that the rural Cambodians cannot be mobilized in Sihanouk's name only, that their mobilization depends, in addition, upon appeals to real socio-economic needs.

The requests of the demonstrators, viewed as an attempt to respond to and cope with the changing situation in Pnompenh, reflect some degree of sophistication. Their request that the authorities rehang Sihanouk's portrait in conjunction with their insistence upon his right to "have it out with" the government embodies the subtle but real suggestion that things were not exactly all right under Sihanouk but that things would certainly be wrong without him. The intriguing element here, in sharp opposition to the frequent view of Khmer peasants as passive and traditionbound, is their tacit acknowledgement of the government's right to negotiate with Sihanouk; this suggests their awareness of the differences between legitimate sacred-organic authority and secular-temporal administration. This is even more striking in view of Sihanouk's own position broadcast over radio Peking two days before the initial demonstration. In this declaration, Sihanouk called for the dissolution of both the government and the National Assembly.

The National Assembly appears to have been a particularly volatile object of hostility for the peasants. In their initial demands, they called for its dissolution. A general riot situation did not appear to have existed until the official delegation from Pnompenh arrived, a delegation containing one or more well-known parlia-

(Continued on page 278)

<sup>14</sup> According to one witness, the court entrance marked "Maison de Justice" was altered to read "Maison de l'injustice."

<sup>15</sup> Communiqué N° 66, *op. cit.*

<sup>16</sup> The efficiency with which the army acted on March 27, 1970, is remarkable. French and Cambodian witnesses testify that American-trained Khmer Krom mercenaries (KKK troops) who had been infiltrated into the army before the coup and who had led the demonstrations against and sackings of the two Vietnamese embassies in Pnompenh were the decisive units in putting down this revolt.

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*"In spite of the vituperation over the Vietnam war and much rhetoric about an American 'withdrawal' from Asia, there has been no major realignment of strategic power relationships in this vast and complex region," notes this specialist, who believes that "closer military cooperation between the United States and Thailand may be the initial step in the second phase of the post-Vietnam era."*

## Thailand and the Early Post-Vietnam Era

BY FRANK C. DARLING

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FOR ALMOST THREE YEARS Thailand has been adjusting to an apparent realignment of political forces in Asia. The essential thrust of this movement has been the pursuit of new goals and new tactics in light of the Nixon doctrine and the gradual reduction of the American presence in the region. The possibility of decreasing support from the United States has required the Thai government to reassess its basic assumptions in both its domestic and foreign policies. According to Professor J. L. S. Girling: "Ever since the American about-turn on Viet Nam, Thai leaders have realised the need to prepare for a new alignment of forces in Asia."<sup>1</sup>

During the past year, the Thai ruling elite has made a significant move in coping with the vagaries of the early post-Vietnam era by placing the administration of its domestic affairs on a more stable and efficient basis. To the dismay of many observers, the Bangkok authorities have interpreted the reduction of American military and economic support as justification for a lesser need to emulate Western styles of democracy and a far greater need to manage internal affairs in a more traditional manner. Like political leaders in Cambodia, South Vietnam and South Korea, the Thai leaders made a concrete move in this direction by abolishing the modest institutions of representative government which they had established in part to placate Western critics of authoritarian military rule. On November 17, 1971, they sent a few tanks and several hundred troops to selected spots in Bangkok and calmly announced that the constitution had been terminated and that Parliament was dissolved. They proclaimed martial law and abolished the Cabinet.

An official announcement of the Revolutionary party stated that this action:

has been necessitated by the deteriorating situation within and outside the country and, in particular, the increasingly grave threat to the security of the nation and to the throne. The seriousness of the situation could not be dealt with effectively in ways other than the seizure of power and the adoption of appropriate revolutionary measures.<sup>2</sup>

As in the past, the Thai government announced that this change in the political system involved no alteration in the nation's foreign policy.

Shortly thereafter, other reasons for the "coup" were cited by top government leaders. They voiced increasing fears caused by the Communist insurgency in the north, student demonstrations at universities in Bangkok, parliamentary obstruction in the elected legislature, adverse economic conditions resulting in a serious trade imbalance, the recent admission of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations, and the uncertain political orientation of the 3,000,000 Chinese residing in the country. The Thai leaders likewise cited the rising crime rate and the unorthodox social styles of Thai young people seeking to imitate the youth culture of the West.

The Thai military elite took the unprecedented action of forming a National Executive Council (NEC) rather than appointing a new Cabinet to administer the policies of the government. The NEC consisted of Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn who had served as Prime Minister since 1963 and assumed the role of Chairman of the new "revolutionary council." General Praphat Charusathien became the Deputy Chairman of the NEC and continued to control the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Interior. Air Marshal Dawee Chullasaphya retained authority over communications, agriculture, and development, while General Krit Sivara

<sup>1</sup> J. L. S. Girling, "Strong-Man Tactics in Thailand: The Problems Remain," *Pacific Community* (April, 1972), p. 538.

<sup>2</sup> Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations, Press Release No. 45, November 18, 1971.

accepted the position of Secretary-General of the National Executive Council. In effect, these four military leaders assumed total control of the Thai government. The only civilian on the NEC was Pote Sarasin, a former Prime Minister and a leading administrator of economic, trade, and industrial affairs. Thanat Khoman, the former Foreign Minister, was removed from this top-level policy-making body. In another unprecedented action, the NEC did not appoint a successor to Thanat's important post at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

While many Thai and foreign critics lamented this action by the Thai ruling regime, the abolition of modest constitutional government in November, 1971, reaffirmed the reality of political power in the kingdom. In spite of rapid economic modernization and close diplomatic relations with Western democracies, the base of Thai politics continues to be military power. The democratic facade erected by the 1968 constitution made it appear that a wider base of representative government was possibly being established. Yet the end of military tolerance with this representative facade caused it to be promptly removed. No other organized political force in the country could oppose this action.

The return to military rule likewise reasserted the fact that the primary rationale of the Thai government is the protection of what it considers to be the national interest. The failure of elected representatives in the Parliament to comport themselves in accordance with the welfare of the entire nation, rather than their own local constituency, was one of the prime reasons cited by the military leaders for the dissolution of Parliament and the reimposition of martial law. In the opinion of the ruling military leadership, the reduction of American aid and military spending had created an urgent requirement for a tighter budget and new sources of income, not the generous and reckless spending of government funds for "pork barrel" projects throughout the kingdom as sought by elected representatives in both the pro-government and opposition political parties.

### THE INTERNAL INSURGENCIES

When abolishing the trappings of constitutional government, the Thai military leaders articulated their fear of the Communist insurgency in the north. Actually, they have been increasingly concerned about the three insurgencies operating within their national boundaries.

The insurgency in the southern provinces along the Thai-Malaysian border involves the least number of insurgents (estimated at about 1,500 men); yet it is

the most complex dissident area because it contains three separate insurgent groups. The Malayan Communist party uses Thai border territory primarily as a sanctuary and staging base. These Chinese Communist insurgents direct their guerrilla warfare activities largely at the Malaysian government, not toward Thailand. They are a nuisance to the Thai government but not a serious threat. More dangerous is a Thai-Muslim separatist movement which directs its violence at Thai military forces in an effort to obtain the secession of the four Malay-populated provinces and to join the Malaysian federation. This dissident organization exploits Malay racial and religious grievances and receives considerable financial support from criminal elements in this prosperous region.<sup>3</sup>

The most awesome development in the southern insurgent area has been the very recent emergence of small groups of Thai Communists which have attacked government forces in the Kra peninsula near Surat Thani and Nakorn Sri Thammarat. These insurgents have very little support since the people inhabiting this region enjoy relatively good living conditions. Yet Thai Communist activities among the dominant Thai Buddhist populace less than 200 miles from Bangkok may pose a serious security problem.

The insurgency in the depressed northeastern provinces has been active since the mid-1950's, although it has been fairly quiescent during the past few years. The estimated 2,000 dissidents in this region receive only intermittent material support (via Laos) from Communist China and North Vietnam, and at present they possess a variety of Chinese, Russian and American weapons. The latest intelligence indicates that the Communist movement in the northeastern provinces may be shifting its emphasis from paramilitary operations to the organization of clandestine village committees.<sup>4</sup> This insurgency among a discontented and economically underprivileged minority of the same racial and linguistic stock as the majority Thai population creates an intense fear in the central government in Bangkok, because its long-range expansive potential extends into larger sectors of the kingdom.

The insurgency in the north, cited by the Thai military leaders as a major reason for the November, 1971, coup, has received widespread publicity due to increasing attacks by insurgent forces. The dissident group in this area consists largely of Meo tribesmen led by Thai and Thai-Chinese Communists trained at special camps in North Vietnam by Chinese Communists.<sup>5</sup> Increasing insurgent activity has been abetted by the migration of Meo tribespeople from areas of military operations in Burma and Laos to lowland sections in northern Thailand which have been recently occupied by landless Thai-Lao villagers moving from poverty-stricken regions in the northeast. The insurgency in this vulnerable region is the internal rebellion in Thailand most directly supported by Com-

<sup>3</sup> *Bangkok World*, November 22, 1970.

<sup>4</sup> Girling, *op. cit.*, p. 540.

<sup>5</sup> Frank C. Darling, "Thailand: De-escalation and Uncertainty," *Asian Survey* (February, 1969), p. 116.

munist China. Approximately 50 per cent of the insurgents have Chinese weapons.<sup>6</sup>

In March, 1972, the Thai government launched the largest military operation in the nation's history against the insurgents in this northern "tri-border" area. For several weeks, some 12,000 Thai army troops sought to destroy the insurgent forces estimated at a few hundred men. This operation yielded few concrete results. The guerrilla leaders had been warned in advance of the government dragnet and only a few prisoners were captured by Thai government forces. The withdrawal of army troops from this sensitive region shortly thereafter again left the area open to renewed insurgent activity. Yet the Thai military leaders and some American military advisers were pleased with the operation in spite of its meager results. It proved that Thai military forces can operate on a large scale and maintain sustained military action over a very difficult terrain. It marked the end of nearly total official indifference to remote insurgent bases. It indicated to the people of the northern lowlands that the central government was increasingly concerned with their security and welfare.

## THE ECONOMY

In addition to official actions caused by adverse international developments and various threats from internal insurgencies, the Thai political elite has responded to the early post-Vietnam era with a renewed effort to improve the national economy. As before, the return to authoritarian rule has been partially justified as a necessary measure to maintain the kingdom's prosperity. Until 1969, many favorable economic conditions fostered a rising standard of living for a growing portion of the population. The Thai government had compiled one of the most impressive records of economic growth among the underdeveloped nations. It was the second largest rice exporter in the world (the United States was the largest). For almost two decades the economy had expanded at a rate of 7.5 per cent each year, and a sound fiscal policy had maintained a balance of payments every year but one since 1933.<sup>7</sup> The Thai baht was one of the hardest currencies in the international monetary market and was freely convertible.

In 1968, the government held foreign exchange reserves of almost \$1,000,000,000 (U.S.), giving it the largest monetary reserve of any non-industrial nation.<sup>8</sup> The per capita income was about \$155 a year, and annual inflation had been kept to less than 2 per cent.

<sup>6</sup> *The New York Times*, March 18, 1972.

<sup>7</sup> Joseph E. Haring and Larry E. Westphal, "Financial Policy in Postwar Thailand: External Equilibrium and Domestic Development," *Asian Survey* (May, 1968), pp. 364-377.

<sup>8</sup> Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations, Press Release No. 27, January 23, 1968.

<sup>9</sup> Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations, Press Release No. 46, November 22, 1971.

Although much of this economic progress was confined to Bangkok and major provincial cities, the Thai regime had instituted two development plans to diversify the economy, increase agricultural production, and expand light industry in an effort to bring a larger share of the new prosperity to broader elements of the rural population.

During the past two years this notable economic record has experienced some severe reversals. The "green" revolution has reduced the international demand for Thai rice, and the sharply declining government income from foreign trade has produced one of the largest deficits in the nation's history. Economic problems caused by decreasing resources in the national treasury were compounded by a rapid population increase (3.3 per cent), increasing land tenancy, widespread unemployment, inadequate foreign investment and insufficient tax revenues.

Yet during this same period the Thai government has succeeded in rectifying some of these major economic deficiencies. Imports have been reduced, and more reliance is being placed on domestically produced goods. New taxes have been imposed and additional efforts are under way to augment the diversification of the national economy. The World Bank has indicated a willingness to make new loans and assist the Third Economic Development Plan. These endeavors were aided by encouraging reports that the trade deficit had declined by 26 per cent during the first seven months of 1971.<sup>9</sup> More favorable trade relations have been negotiated with Japan. For the first time, trade agreements have been concluded with three Communist countries, Bulgaria, Rumania, and the Soviet Union. Economic conditions markedly improved throughout 1972 due to the transfer of sizable American air force units from South Vietnam to Thailand, accompanied by an increase in American military spending.

## FOREIGN POLICY

In the realm of foreign policy, the Thai government has shown its greatest uncertainty and fear since the beginning of the Nixon doctrine. Much confusion has been generated in Bangkok by the rapid withdrawal of American military forces from South Vietnam and the American détente with the People's Republic of China. For a time the Thai leaders undertook several actions indicating their apprehension. Until resigning from the Cabinet, Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman was engaging in indirect exploratory talks with Peking regarding the possibility of terminating Chinese support to the insurgents in Thailand in exchange for the removal of American air bases from Thai soil.

Shortly after his ouster from the government, Thanad was appointed as a "Special Envoy of the National Executive Council of Thailand" to partici-

pate in the annual meeting of foreign ministers of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations at Kuala Lumpur. At this conference, the former Thai Foreign Minister signed a "declaration" on behalf of his government stating that "the neutralization of Southeast Asia is a desirable objective" and the region should be recognized "as a Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality, free from any form or manner of interference by outside Powers."

During 1972, the Thai government withdrew all of its troops from South Vietnam. It took initial steps toward some replacement of American support by seeking closer trading ties with Japan and by signing trade agreements with the Soviet Union and two East European satellites. The Thai government, in brief, began the early probings of another period of "readjustment" in the friendly but mutable relations it had maintained with the United States since the beginning of the cold war. Once again, the Thai leaders were responding to the intermittent need of shifting their policies in accord with the changing actions of the major non-Communist world power concerned with global interests and responsibilities.

During 1972, the United States government took several significant steps to mitigate the fears of the ruling regime in Thailand. Marshall Green, the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, was dispatched to Bangkok following President Richard Nixon's visit to Peking to explain that the American rapprochement with Communist China would not alter United States treaty obligations in Thailand.<sup>10</sup> Two months later, a similar guarantee was voiced by Vice President Spiro Agnew during a three-day visit to the Thai capital.

Subsequent concrete measures by the United States were even more reassuring. On May 9, President Nixon ordered the mining of Haiphong harbor, and the following month he reversed the withdrawal of American military forces from Thailand. Increasing American air attacks against North Vietnam and against Communist forces in South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos led to the reopening of all six air bases in Thailand formerly used by the United States. A seventh base was being expanded at Nam Phong. By September, 1972, more American military personnel were stationed in Thailand (50,000) than in South Vietnam (43,500).

Many Western observers have expressed serious misgivings about the renewal of closer military relations between the United States and Thailand. Some analysts claim that the new American military build-up is again involving Thailand in United States policy in Southeast Asia and unnecessarily jeopardizing Thai

national security. A recent *Christian Science Monitor* editorial stated:

The independence and self-reliance of the Thai kingdom have been one of the brightest spots on the Asian scene over the years. It is sad to see that brightness dimmed both as a result of the current authoritarian regime and of Thailand's involvement in the Indo-China war.<sup>11</sup>

Ross Terrill, a leading Australian specialist on Asian affairs, has commented:

Will Thailand itself escape unscathed from the present spiral of tension? . . . the two pressures—war and revolution—are ultimately connected, as Bangkok will discover if it goes on putting guns above reason, seeking security by outside force rather than by inner strength and independence of action, refusing to come to terms with China, and spending on the baubles of a fake militarism the resources which could help the Thai people achieve a better standard of living.<sup>12</sup>

Very likely, the policy-makers in the United States and Thailand see future trends in Asia much more clearly than their critics. In spite of the vituperation over the Vietnam war and much rhetoric about an American "withdrawal" from Asia, there has been no major realignment of strategic power relationships in this vast and complex region. The power structure is not really "multi-polar," as many commentators contend. Instead, the political-military forces in Asia are still essentially "uni-polar," with certain "multi-polar" tendencies emerging in economic and trade relations. Despite the removal of more than 500,000 American ground troops from South Vietnam, the United States continues to be *the* major power in the area. American tactics, not strategy, are in the process of change.

The Soviet Union can extend only limited military force in this region far from its major industrial and transportation centers in Europe and adjoining territories. Soviet capacity to engage in long-distance military operations is also restricted by significant domestic economic deficiencies. Japan's impressive economic capability is not being matched by a commensurate expansion of military power. Japanese diplomacy faces serious obstacles in its relations with

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<sup>10</sup> *The New York Times*, March 9, 1972.

<sup>11</sup> *Christian Science Monitor*, October 14, 1972.

<sup>12</sup> *The Atlantic Monthly*, October, 1972, p. 22.



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*"... the historical evidence indicates that the shifting winds of 'hard' and 'soft' stands blew up the storm that finally overtook Laos, . . . and that the course of American action was set from crisis to crisis, from one decision to the next. . . ."*

## Laos: Was the War a Conspiracy?

BY ARTHUR J. DOMMEN

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SOME RECENT WRITINGS on the American involvement in Indochina have interpreted it as the logical outcome of a global forward strategy pursued by the United States since the end of World War II. This thesis has gained sufficient attention to merit examination, particularly insofar as it applies to Laos, the country that has been the keystone to Indochina in both a geographical sense and a historical sense.

Statements made in the 1950's by President Dwight D. Eisenhower and Vice President Richard Nixon about preserving Malaya's tin and rubber resources have been adduced, together with other references of a similar nature, in support of a hypothesis that economic advantage for big business has been one of the principal driving forces behind the deepening American involvement. Such concern for securing a share of precious natural resources continues today to push American policy-makers, in this view, to attempt to impose an American-style solution to the war on the peoples of Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. American firms are competing with Japanese interests to lay their hands on the potential oil fields off the Mekong Delta, the profits from which are to be used to shore up an anti-Communist regime in Saigon.

The proponents of this thesis have found doctrinal backing in the writings of Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber, whose book on American investment in Europe was one of the first warnings sounded against the multinational corporation, and Claude Julien, author of the book *L'Empire Américain*. It seems that once again France, which gave current to the idea of neutralism in the late 1940's, has proved to be the fountainhead of a political doctrine at the center of a debate about policy in Indochina.

Aside from the acquisition of raw materials, other attractions are adduced: cheap labor for foreign-controlled light industries, a potential market for the products furnished by an expanding United States Pacific trade, and the opportunity for an early and

potentially lucrative role by American corporations in the basic economic and financial institutions of the region. To borrow the terms these writers use, this has all resulted in the construction of the United States-Japan Pacific system as part of a global system of economic, military and cultural domination, in which Japan plays the role of willing partner of the United States. The expansion of American control is made possible by the maintenance of puppet governments in Saigon, Pnompenh and Vientiane, utterly manipulated by strings pulled by the administration in Washington, D. C.

This neo-Leninist interpretation of recent history is completed by coupling these perceived goals of American intervention with a "conspiracy" explanation showing that successive administrations involved the country in a major war on the Southeast Asian mainland surreptitiously without informing the American public and Congress of the actual facts. The Nixon Doctrine, we are told, represents nothing new, but only more of the same in new verbiage.

This thesis has a certain superficial plausibility about it, in spite of the rather weak attempts of its proponents in their most recent pamphlets to accommodate it to the realities of the Nixon-Mao summit meeting. To be sure, there always existed a great gap, in my view, between the statements made by Washington officials in the 1950's about "containing" China and the Soviet Union and the intractable geomorphology of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. The question to be asked is to what extent those expressions of views reflected the actual opinions of those who made them, and to what extent they were diplomatically motivated declarations intended to buck up flagging allies. Moreover, officials at the highest levels of government entertained, until fairly recently, a highly distorted conception of the basic power relationships that existed among Peking, Moscow, and the Communist parties of Southeast Asia, which fact did not make for intelligible judgments. I could never see one of those

maps printed in the news magazines showing large red arrows pointing from Yunnan and Kwangsi down into the lower Mekong River Valley and the Cambodian highlands without asking myself what the arrows, in fact, were meant to represent.

The *Pentagon Papers*, when they were published, appeared at first sight to deliver a knock-out blow to the thesis that the United States had somehow become mired in the quicksand of the Second Indochina War through its own ignorance and clumsiness. The mass of official memoranda, situation reports, contingency plans, and telegraphed instructions appeared to prove that someone, somewhere, knew what was going on at all times, and it is hardly surprising that one of the initial interpretations placed on the mammoth study by the press was to the effect that President Lyndon Johnson had reached a secret consensus with his Cabinet on the strategy to pursue in the war long before hints of the existence of such a consensus emerged to public view (when, in the last months of that administration, it broke down). Americans like certainty; they do not like to be told that their government is in a quandary about what to do next.

That the vast documentation contained in the *Pentagon Papers* revealed that there was much below the surface concerning American involvement in Indochina cannot for a moment be doubted. This is obviously not the proper place to attempt an analysis of papers that will take historians a generation to disentangle. Now that the initial noise surrounding their revelations is subsiding, now that the "heroes" and "villains" have been duly identified, conditions are becoming more favorable for a dispassionate look at the contents of these valuable papers by competent historians. Unfortunately, efforts in this direction already being made by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee have so far produced little more than a repetitious accounting of missed "opportunities," and virtually no insights into the question of the character of the relations between Washington and the Indochinese governments. The task in its great bulk awaits the pen of the perceptive scholar.

Here I would like only to make the observation that, for Laos at least, the global strategy hypothesis of American involvement shows numerous deficiencies, on the score of economic imperialism and of the prescience of the planning in Washington.

Whatever one may conclude about the search for oil off the coast of South Vietnam and the behavior of the oil companies, no oil has so far been discovered in Laos, a country whose reserves of raw materials for development are as yet unevaluated. Furthermore, the country possesses little cheap labor for American companies, offers a relatively limited market for American goods, and boasts few economic and financial institutions that might tempt American capital managers. The United States has not taken the oppor-

tunity to construct bomber bases in Laos directed against China over the past ten years, and Laos' support for American policies in world councils has never proven crucial. On the face of it, then, there must exist other reasons for the deep American involvement in that country. I would like to offer two principal thoughts on this subject.

First, we know that Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, who was anxious to have Laos participate in the SEATO collective defense arrangements (which were made following the 1954 Geneva Conference) to the fullest extent permitted under the letter of those agreements, saw the American role in that region as one of supplying the equipment and training for the national armies which would, he supposed, constitute an effective deterrent to armed aggression. In his testimony on behalf of the SEATO treaty before the Senate, Dulles stressed that a major purpose of the policy of mutual security was to obviate the necessity of one day sending American troops to fight there. This was a relatively costless and painless policy to the United States. But it contained an inherent contradiction arising from the uncertainty as to what would be the response should the governments of the region be faced with guerrilla threats, which is what happened in Laos when the Pathet Lao continued to maintain its fighting units intact in Sam Neua and Phong Saly and continued to resist the attempts of the government in Vientiane to reassert full sovereignty over those areas.

From relatively early on, we see evidence, on the American side, of a debate over how to react to an ambiguous guerrilla challenge, particularly in the event the Prime Minister of Laos, as nearly happened in 1961, asked for intervention in his country by SEATO forces, which would necessarily mean American forces, above all. Thus, the evidence is that, far from having a clear-cut, preconceived policy to cope with situations as they arose, American policy-makers were caught at critical moments in a state of some confusion. This is evident from the difficulty experienced by the highest officials in articulating in understandable terms what it was the United States sought to achieve in that region. The usual expedient was to fall back on the legalistic jargon of defending existing international commitments, but occasionally someone like Secretary of State Dean Rusk would conjure up the image of "one billion Chinese armed with nuclear weapons," as if nuclear war were a matter of numbers of population. The connection between armed deterrence, on the one hand, and diplomacy across ideological boundaries, on the other, had yet to be made, at least in the Far East. If this was true about relations with Peking, it was tenfold truer about relations with Hanoi.

My second point derives from this, which is the real root of the dilemma of American intervention in Indo-

china. It would be hard to find two nations that trusted each other less than North Vietnam and the United States after 1954. The two came face to face in Laos long before they did in Vietnam. Hanoi, with its principal interest in the struggle for reunification with South Vietnam, had to keep its lines open to the south through Laos. Thus, while both sides in the conflict were talking in terms of Laos, they actually meant South Vietnam. Laos was caught in the middle.

From the American point of view, a "soft" stand (neutralism, coalition, negotiations, Geneva Conference) in Laos implied a "hard" stand (military advisers, equipment, troops, demonstrable punishment inflicted on the enemy) in South Vietnam; and vice versa. The stands in each place tended to shift in accordance with the changing evaluation of the mood of the leaders in Hanoi, even after the connection between the situations in Laos and South Vietnam had been perceived. But the task of bringing the two stands into harmony eluded the grasp of the leaders in Washington. This resulted in repeated collapses of negotiating possibilities, with each failure provoking in turn another round of escalation of hostilities. It is this dynamic, I believe, that goes a long way towards explaining the extent of eventual American intervention in Laos.

Can it be regarded merely as coincidence that the Laos crisis of the summer of 1959 broke out just at the moment when the fortunes of the Vietnamese Communist party in South Vietnam had sunk to their lowest ebb under the crippling effect of the Diem government's police measures? I think not. Hanoi needed to have secure use of the mountain trails through Laos, if not for the present, at least for the future, in the event aid to the compatriots of the South became necessary.

### KENNEDY'S POSITION

President John F. Kennedy, when he took office in 1961, very courageously decided to support a neutralist government in Laos as the least costly means of buying time in South Vietnam. Yet even after he had made this decision, the renewed fighting in Laos almost compelled him to reverse it; he came within a hair's breadth of implementing a contingency plan to send American ground troops into Laos in the spring of 1961, as the *Pentagon Papers* reveal.

The Geneva Accord on Laos was duly signed in 1962. But already the effect of the American "soft" stand in Laos was provoking difficulties for the United States in South Vietnam, where President Ngo Dinh Diem was seeking a firmer commitment from the

United States and warning that the agreement with North Vietnam over Laos might prove to have been a mistake. The increased American assistance to South Vietnam resulted in a slight but strategically important shift of the balance of forces in that country in favor of the government and against the Communists, at a higher level of hostilities involving helicopters and guerrilla battalions. In South Vietnam there were 2,859,000 people under Communist domination in July, 1962; in April, 1963, there were 1,719,000 people under Communist domination.<sup>1</sup>

But already Hanoi was maintaining a highly detectable presence in Laos, keeping the trails open to the South, not complying with the troop withdrawal provisions of the Geneva Accord. Like the question of defining the borders between Laos and Vietnam (which the Hanoi government officially stated would have to await the definitive political settlement in the South), the question became a question whose resolution could not be tackled until the issue of the war in the South had been decided. But meanwhile the hanging question of the North Vietnamese troops in itself became a factor in the escalation of the war on the ground and in the air, and by 1964 it had directly contributed to the break-up of the coalition, thereby further complicating the problem of reaching a meeting of minds about the whole fabric.

When the United States Air Force technicians in Thailand examined aerial photographs of convoys of trucks and armaments crossing from North Vietnam into Laos in the autumn of 1962 and shipped the evidence back to Washington, they were astonished that President Kennedy took no action. Here was indeed a violation of the Geneva Accord which gave rise to a debate. On the one hand, there were those who argued that retaliation would mean in all probability the end of the Geneva Accord itself and the resumption of full-scale fighting on a fluid front in Laos, which might call for intervention by American ground troops (meaning the end of Kennedy's chances for a neutralist Laos). On the other hand, there were those who argued, equally cogently, for retaliation, on the premise that letting the North Vietnamese get away with this would amount to demonstrating to Hanoi that the United States was not prepared to enforce respect for the Geneva Accord (likewise meaning the end of chances for a neutralist Laos). President Kennedy decided to risk non-action, a decision that is now described by one of his principal advisers of that time as "the greatest single error in American policy of the 1960's."<sup>2</sup> Thenceforth, the official veil of secrecy placed over American actions in Laos, predicated on the continuing respect for the Geneva Accord as the basis of American policy, gave rise to the "secret war" that figures as a central bit of evidence in the conspiracy theory.

The adoption of the "soft" stand in Laos had the

<sup>1</sup> *The Pentagon Papers; The Senator Gravel Edition* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971), Vol. II, p. 157.

<sup>2</sup> W. W. Rostow, *The Diffusion of Power* (New York: Macmillan, 1972), p. 290.

effect, as I have indicated, of stiffening those who favored a "hard" stand in South Vietnam where, the argument ran, the crucial confrontation with North Vietnam would come and where conditions for supporting United States troops, supposing this became necessary, were considerably more favorable than they were in landlocked Laos. Yet it was precisely in 1962 in Geneva, at the final meetings of that long-drawn-out conference, that the North Vietnamese took soundings, which must in retrospect be considered serious, as to the American willingness to negotiate a political settlement in South Vietnam, based on neutralism and a coalition government. They found no response, largely, I venture to say, because President Kennedy underestimated their determination to push the war in South Vietnam ahead. The result was escalation on both sides and, from the United States point of view, the mortgaging of the Geneva Accord in Laos, where a commitment existed, and the creation of a fresh commitment in South Vietnam, where one had hardly existed before. The time was out of joint.

In December, 1963, as is now known, the Central Committee of the Vietnamese Communist party secretly decided to step up the military campaign in the South. By the summer of 1964, American jets were in action over Laos, hitting North Vietnamese anti-aircraft gun emplacements and supply convoys on the Ho Chi Minh Trail. The shaky political situation faced by the Saigon government following the overthrow of Diem had become an added argument in favor of a "hard" stand in South Vietnam that would demonstrate the determination of the United States to stand by a government seriously threatened by guerrilla war within, fomented by massive help from without. American determination against North Vietnam was visibly conveyed by the first retaliatory raids in August, 1964. The possibility of negotiation was slim and a further effort by the Lao factions to restore the coalition government ended in failure at that same time. In 1965, the war escalated still further, with the landing of American ground troops in South Vietnam.

Thus, my second point is simply this: the historical evidence indicates that the shifting winds of "hard" and "soft" stands blew up the storm that finally overtook Laos, that they generated a certain momentum of conflict, and that the course of American action was set from crisis to crisis, from one decision to the next, each decision small but each momentous in its own way, moving the situation along a path whose inevitable logic lent it, in retrospect, the semblance of having been planned from the start. In this sequence, each side in the conflict played a role of reinforcing the response of the other to small moves. In other words, there need never have been any "consensus" at all among American policy-makers as to how to

reach a clearly perceived goal, even supposing one existed, given the urgency of the day-to-day decisions.

The fact that this point seems to have been overlooked by the proponents of the thesis of determinism may be attributable to the fact that they have left out of account an extremely important factor of the situation: the presence in Laos of North Vietnamese troops since 1962. The Hanoi government has never officially admitted their existence; yet their presence has been a constant source of embarrassment to Hanoi in its diplomacy, although less visibly than the "secret" American actions in Laos. When Pheng Norindr, the former Secretary General of the Laotian government, asked a North Vietnamese diplomat in Vientiane in 1971 why it was that Hanoi steadfastly refused to admit what everyone already knew to be a fact, the latter replied: "*Vous savez, pour nous c'est une question de principe.*"

It is, indeed, a matter of principle for Hanoi, for to admit the presence of its troops would be to admit the violation of the provision of the Geneva Accord prohibiting any nation from making use of the territory of Laos to interfere in the internal affairs of another country, and thereby implicitly to admit the illegitimacy of the war in South Vietnam, making of the latter a foreign instead of an internal conflict. This was something Hanoi would not do, and could not be expected to do.

Writers about events in Indochina are under no such prohibition. Let us be honest with ourselves. Can we properly judge American actions in Laos without considering the armed occupation against which these actions were primarily aimed? The resulting picture is as incomplete, and as incomprehensible, as a description of a chess match consisting of the moves of only one of the players. Some have quibbled about the exact number of North Vietnamese troops in Laos, which is of course not ascertainable. But I see no merit in this. The Geneva Accord does not provide for a single North Vietnamese soldier to be in Laos. This is not an attempt to affix the blame, for the accord was certainly violated by both sides, and early on, in the step-by-step process of escalation I have alluded to. Lastly, from the point of view of international relations, how can agreements between nations be arrived at if there is no honest commitment to live up to the terms agreed upon? A world living by the  
(Continued on page 278)

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*"The reasons given by the government for the 21-month emergency rule in Malaysia were the condition of the country and the need to bring about a consensus for amending the constitution." According to this commentator: "These two reasons were not valid. The real reason was the condition of the UMNO, which was not yet ready to return to normal rule because of its own internal crisis."*

## The Politics of Coalition in Malaysia

BY SYED HUSSEIN ALATAS

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**W**HAT FORCE HAS DOMINATED Malaysian politics since the May 13, 1969, racial clash in Kuala Lumpur? It can be argued that the dominating force in Malaysian politics today is the underlying conflict for power within the ruling party, namely the United Malays National Organization. The UMNO is the dominant partner in the ruling Alliance party, consisting of the UMNO, the Malaysian Chinese Association, the Malaysian Indian Congress, and the Alliance Direct Membership Organization, ADMO. The strength and unity of the Alliance depend on the UMNO and the MCA, representing the two major communal groups in the country. The dominant partner is the UMNO.

After the election of May 10, 1969, and the May 13 riot, the Alliance party was adjusting to the new situation, having lost its two-thirds majority in Parliament. Simultaneously, the conflict within the UMNO became acute. There was a strong undercurrent within the UMNO wanting Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman to resign. The idea that he should resign was in the air even before the election. He accommodated himself to this idea, and declared his intention to do so, without setting a date. After the election and the May 13 incident, pressure from within the UMNO mounted. A section within the UMNO, the Malay public, and the government service thought that Rahman should step down in favor of Tun Abdul Razak. Democracy was suspended for 21 months, until the UMNO resolved its issues of leadership. Those opposing Tunku Abdul Rahman thought him neglectful of Malay interests. They disapproved of his close association with the dominant faction of the MCA which, they believed, was a useless political force.

The reasons given by the government for the 21-

month emergency rule in Malaysia were the condition of the country and the need to bring about a consensus for amending the constitution. These two reasons were not valid. The real reason was the condition of the UMNO, which was not yet ready to return to normal rule because of its own internal crisis. As far as the condition of the country was concerned, a few weeks after the riots of May 13, 1969, the government had the situation under control. Yet democracy was suspended for 21 months. During this period, political parties were not allowed to hold public meetings, or their own general meetings, to publish their journals or to give public lectures, although they were allowed to make press statements and to hold committee meetings with police permits. This move was not so much directed against the opposition as against the UMNO, where dissension was brewing. Agreement had to be achieved first within the UMNO as to the date of the Tunku's resignation and the assumption of the premiership and party leadership by Tun Abdul Razak. This meant that dissension had to be eliminated before the UMNO called for a general meeting.

An official disclosure of this conflict came in July and August, 1969, from Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman:

On July 20, the Tunku, in an interview with a Malay weekly, *Utusan Zaman*, revealed that certain groups were attempting to oust him from the leadership of the Alliance and thus topple the party. On August 1, the Tunku made another disclosure that extremists or ultras within his own party, the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) also wanted to topple him and take over control of the party. In the wake of the Tunku's disclosures, the Deputy Prime Minister and Director of the National Operations Council, Tun Abdul Razak, appealed to the people "to stand together and support our Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman." Tun Razak's appeal brought forth floods of messages and resolutions from all sections of the people pledging support for the Tunku and the Government.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Malaysian Digest*, August 14, 1969, vol. 1, no. 4, p. 2. Federal Department of Information, Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur.

The Minister of Home Affairs (now also Deputy Prime Minister), Tun Dr. Ismail, warned that

if the anti-Tunku Abdul Rahman campaign or activities are carried out in such a manner or to such an extent as to cause undue fear and alarm among members of any community, or if they are likely to lead to violence or to any breach of security and public order, I will not hesitate to exercise my powers under the law against those responsible for such activities.<sup>2</sup>

Tun Tan Siew Sin, Minister with Special Functions and president of the MCA, said that his party would sink or float with Tunku Abdul Rahman. The MCA president also pledged "that the same loyalty would be given to Tun Abdul Razak when the time comes for him to succeed the Tunku."<sup>3</sup> On efforts to topple the Tunku he said: "There is nothing more risky than to force the Tunku out."<sup>4</sup> But, he added, it was up to the Tunku whether he decided to step down or not. One thing was clear: the Alliance's top leaders intended to assure a smooth change of leadership. The position of Tun Abdul Razak was that of a loyal successor. While the anti-Tunku faction wanted him to take over, he was not desirous or prepared for a showdown with the Tunku. Neither was there any noticeable breach between them. On the eve of National Day, August 31, 1970, the Tunku announced his resignation date, September 21, 1970, and praised and recommended Tun Abdul Razak as his successor. In his farewell address to the nation as Prime Minister, he described Tun Abdul Razak as his friend, colleague, alter ego and shadow.<sup>5</sup>

The reason why the Tunku fixed this date was the installation of the newly elected King by the Conference of Rulers. According to the custom of his state, Kedah, an uncle cannot do homage to his nephew. The newly elected King happened to be the Sultan of Kedah, the nephew of Tunku Abdul Rahman. To see that the Sultan of Kedah was elected as the next King, with the consequent resignation of the Tunku, took time. Whatever lobbying was done by those who wanted to see the Tunku go and Tun Razak succeed him, it certainly reached the Conference of Rulers, the meeting of the nine Malay sultans. This, to my mind, was another reason why the emergency was prolonged. Undoubtedly, one of the strong reasons for those who desired to see the Tunku out was the bad shape of the Alliance after the 1969 election.

### PARLIAMENTARY COMPONENTS

The major parliamentary components of the Federation of Malaysia are three: Sabah and Sarawak

(East Malaysia) in the north of Borneo, and Malaya, (West Malaysia), historically known as the Malay Peninsula. The division of seats in Parliament (the House of Representatives) is: Sabah, 16, Sarawak, 24, and Malaya, 104. The 1969 election was conducted for 128 seats, of which 104 were in Malaya. The term for the Sabah representatives expired in April, 1972. According to usual practice, the election in Sarawak was to take place after the West Malaysian election. West Malaysia is the far more developed and populous part of the Federation. It is, in fact, the basis of the Federation. In the election in West Malaysia, the Alliance captured 65 seats, while the opposition captured 37 seats (4 parties). Two previously Alliance-held seats were vacant and reelection was necessary. Even with the two seats, their total strength in a Parliament of 144 was thus 67 plus 16 from Sabah, less than two-thirds.

Because they were not confident of winning 14 of the 24 seats in Sarawak, the conviction dawned upon the Alliance leaders that they had lost their two-thirds majority for good and that political erosion had begun. A sense of gloom pervaded the Alliance party. For a variety of reasons, the Tunku was blamed for this setback. Parliament was then suspended and the emergency rule was introduced. The ostensible reason was the May 13 riot but it hardly required 21 months to return the country to parliamentary rule after a riot in the capital which raged for only 2 days and which was followed immediately by the restoration of peace and order.

Immediately after the May, 1969, election the Alliance party set out to weaken the opposition. The emergency prevented an increase in momentum, and inaction was forced upon the opposition. The country was told that the return to Parliament depended on the opposition's agreeing to constitutional changes. Thus in March, 1970, in London, Tun Dr. Ismail, then Minister of Home Affairs and also the Deputy Prime Minister, said:

The return to the parliamentary democracy will now depend entirely on the results of the general election in Sarawak and Sabah. If the Alliance fails to get the two-thirds majority necessary for approving amendments to the Constitution then we will have to negotiate with the opposition about support in our wish to isolate in the Constitution the several contentious communal problems. If they do not agree, then I do not see how we can recall Parliament. The blame for this will rest on the opposition. If, on the other hand, the Alliance gets the two-thirds majority, then the blame for any delay in returning to Parliamentary democracy will rest with us.

The delay in holding the election in Sarawak, which took place one year and two months later, July 4, 1970, and the delay in reconvening Parliament, which took place 8 months after the completion of the general election in Sarawak, were ascribed to the situation of the country and the need for time to seek sup-

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Malaysian Digest*, vol. 2, no. 16, September 4, 1970, p. 2. What is meant by "shadow" is not clear.

port from the opposition for the constitutional amendments.

The constitutional amendments accomplished the following objectives: (a) Prohibited the questioning of any matter, right, status, position, privilege, sovereignty or prerogative established or protected by the constitution. The questioning of the implementation of a government policy was excluded; (b) Removed the immunities of Members of Parliament and Members of Legislative Assemblies of the States when discussing such sensitive issues; (c) Rectified the expression "official purpose," in respect of National Language so as to include the purpose of a public authority; (d) Enabled the King to ensure the reservation for Malays and natives of any of the States in East Malaysia of reasonable proportion of places in higher educational institutions; and (e) Equated the position of the natives of any of the States in East Malaysia with the Malays in West Malaysia.

The Constitutional Amendment Bill was passed on March 3, 1971, with 125 votes for and 17 against. Three opposition parties voted with the government; two opposed it; while the coalition partner in Sarawak voted with the government. All along it was clear that the bill would be passed by a two-thirds majority, because 21 opposition votes would definitely be in favor. Before Parliament was reconvened in July, 1970, the Alliance was short of one vote for the two-thirds majority. It was in a position to test the views of at least 3 opposition parties with a total vote of 28. The bill was calculated to prevent disruptive communal politics. General opinion was in favor of it, especially after the May 13 riot. As appeared later, all three opposition parties voted with the government. That which was readily available as the ostensible condition for a return to parliamentary rule was deliberately delayed.

#### CHANGE OF LEADERSHIP

The real cause for the delay was however the problem of the change of leadership within the UMNO. Until the issue was resolved, the emergency had to be maintained, because a return to normal rule meant normal party activities, resolutions, demonstrations and general meetings—activities which the UMNO could ill afford.

That the government should have a dialogue with the opposition had been repeatedly urged by the opposition.<sup>6</sup> The government responded by setting up a 67-member consultative body. The National Consultative Council was established in January, 1970, one year before Parliament was reconvened. An informal meeting with the opposition parties could have facilitated matters, but this step was evaded by the

Alliance party. The return to Parliament was delayed at least by one and a half years because of the internal problem of the Alliance party, namely the UMNO.

After the Sarawak election of July, 1970, the Alliance had 90 seats. It could be sure of at least 12 Pan-Malayan Islamic party and 9 Sarawak National party votes to support the constitutional amendments. It had a two-thirds majority in July, 1970. On March 3, 1971, the Dewan Rakyat (House of Representatives, Parliament) passed the constitutional amendment, 125 votes against 17. Three opposition parties voted with the government and two voted against it.

It was clear that a national consensus existed. It was also clear that the Alliance by then commanded a two-thirds majority as a government in coalition with a Sarawak party previously in the opposition. On July 4, 1970, the opposition strength in Parliament was 51 seats out of 144. By September 5, 1972, it dwindled to 26 seats. There was some crossing of the floor but the main reason for the decline was the policy of coalition.

After the vote on the constitutional amendments, the Alliance might have been satisfied with a comfortable majority. Everywhere the tide was turning against the opposition. Yet the Alliance sought its cooperation, turning toward opposition parties that had stagnated for the 15 years or were about to die. None of the opposition parties with whom the Alliance sought coalition were in a position to defeat the Alliance in the next general election. Only the Sarawak coalition appeared to be politically sound. (There the Alliance had 9 out of 24 state seats, and a coalition for a party with 5 seats appeared to be a necessity.) This coalition required the continuous suspension of political party activities to prevent an outburst of rebellion.

In Penang, the Gerakan state government lived on borrowed time after the severe party crisis of June, 1971. The Alliance could have recaptured Penang in the next election. In Perak, the opposition party suffered from desertion and disunity. The state government was controlled by the Alliance, with a majority of two. Given time, this majority would increase when opposition members crossed the floor.

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<sup>6</sup> See my article, "The Rukunegara and the Return to Democracy in Malaysia," *Pacific Community* (Tokyo), vol. 2, no. 4 (July, 1971), p. 803.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

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### On Southeast Asia

**FIRE IN THE LAKE: THE VIETNAMESE AND THE AMERICANS IN VIETNAM.** BY FRANCES FITZGERALD. (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1972. 491 pages, bibliography and index, \$12.50.)

Frances FitzGerald has drawn on her familiarity with both American and Vietnamese society to write an analysis of the war in Indochina, a collision of two worlds, separated by vast gulfs of geography, language and culture.

On one side of this conflict is "the greatest power in the history of the world, a nation that could, if its rulers so desired, blow up the world, feed the earth's population or explore the galaxy." The other side represents "a small number of people in a country of peasants largely sustained by a technology centuries old. The meeting between the two was the meeting . . . of two different epochs of history."

As she sees it: "By intervening in the Vietnamese struggle the United States was attempting to fit its global strategies into a world of hillock and hamlet, to reduce its majestic concerns for the containment of Communism and the Free World to a dimension where governments rose and fell as a result of arguments between two colonels' wives."

According to the author, the Americans are canted towards the future, the traditional Vietnamese, to the past, with a patriarchal type of government and life style. In this type of society, the non-Communist Vietnamese believe in intellectual freedom no more than the Communists, a fact that Americans find hard to believe. Although the Vietnamese have suffered the intellectual and political diversity brought by the French, the majority still perceive this diversity as something not suited for the Vietnamese way of life.

Frances FitzGerald shows how both parties in this continuing struggle have failed to understand each other's motives and actions, with tragic results for all parties involved. The peace that is yet to come for the Vietnamese will have to be a peace of "unity; the unity of north and south, the unity of a way of life and the continuity of Vietnamese history from the past into the future."

That revolution and peace will come the author does not doubt: ". . . behind the dam of American troops and American money the pressure is building toward one of those sudden historical shifts when 'individualism' and its attendant corruption gives

way to the discipline of the revolutionary community." When this inevitable shift comes, "It will simply mean that the moment has arrived for the narrow flame of revolution to cleanse the lake of Vietnamese society from the corruption and disorder of the American war." The "fire in the lake" will restore Vietnam to the Vietnamese.

*Fire in the Lake* is one of the most detailed and moving accounts of the "American war in Vietnam" and its destructive and corrupting impact on Vietnamese society.

**HO CHI MINH AND HIS VIETNAM: A PERSONAL MEMOIR.** BY JEAN SAINTENY. (Chicago: Cowles Book Co., 1972. 193 pages, appendices and index, \$6.95).

Jean Sainteny has written a biography of Ho Chi Minh based on his 20-year personal relationship with Ho.

**ON THE OTHER SIDE.** BY KATE WEBB. (New York: Quadrangle Books, Inc., 1972. 160 pages and photographs, \$6.95.)

Twenty-three days as a Vietcong captive are described in vivid manner by Kate Webb, UPI Phnompenh bureau manager.

**JAPAN'S RELATIONS WITH SOUTHEAST ASIA, 1952-1960.** BY K. V. KESAVAN. (Bombay: Somaiya Publications Pvt. Ltd., 1972. 243 pages, appendices, bibliography and index, Rs. 30.00.)

Since 1962 the Japanese government has been fostering closer relations with the nations of Southeast Asia. The author of this scholarly work examines Japan's formative relations with the region in general and with the Philippines and Indonesia in particular.

**SUKARNO.** BY J. D. LEGGE. (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1972. 431 pages and index, \$10.95.)

Professor Legge, in writing the history of Sukarno, the man, also gives an interesting account of the history of Indonesia and the political movements that resulted in an independent nation.

**JAVA IN A TIME OF REVOLUTION.** BY BENEDICT R. O'G. ANDERSON. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972. 494 pages, appendices and index, \$15.00.)

Professor Anderson is a southeast Asian specialist of note and he writes in much and interesting detail

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## OUR INDOCHINA WAR

(Continued from page 244)

various options of 1969 had demanded success for the policy of "Vietnamization," in South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, and had required that the "national prestige" not be caused to suffer by failure to attain that objective, for fear of the consequences for American influence among its allies. There was contemplated no compromise with the "enemy."<sup>18</sup> But the May 8 proposals made a radical change in that position: the United States would be content with a cease-fire that left the Saigon regime in being, instead of replaced outright as proposed by Hanoi and the NLF. This was separation of the military from the political issue: the United States would be enabled to extricate itself from the Indochina War; and the Vietnamese would decide their own future, in accordance with the doctrine of self-determination.

Here it is essential to refer to the position of President Thieu. He held out no hope of a negotiated settlement. His position had been clearly set forth as a policy of "Four No's": no neutrality, no cession of territory, no political role for Communists in South Vietnam, no coalition government. Said Thieu: "I will continue to defend my four no's until death."<sup>19</sup> He actually proposed more war, not less. In a speech delivered at the beginning of August, 1972, he stated that, in order to save South Vietnam, the United States had to keep up the "relentless bombing" of North Vietnam for another six or seven months, to achieve the destruction of the enemy's economy and war machine and to force Hanoi to accept an internationally guaranteed cease-fire for *all of Indochina*. If Saigon's allies lacked the necessary determination, he said, "the war will go on in Indochina forever."<sup>20</sup>

The stress on the role of Saigon's allies was significant. By the present program, U.S. ground forces in South Vietnam will number only 27,000 men on December 1. The ARVN forces, which have been supplied and trained by the United States since 1954, number over a million men. By the Vietnamization theory, the Saigon government should thus have a reasonable chance to survive—and to prevail.

But it is evident that Thieu, for one, does not possess a faith in his future commensurate with the confidence voiced in Washington. The reason is obvious. There has been a vastly greater destruction of the

social fabric of Laos, Cambodia and South Vietnam by our warfare than was the case in China under Chiang Kai-shek. The governments we support there do not democratically reflect the aspirations of the nations they govern. The Communists control much of South Vietnam, and most of Laos and Cambodia. The economies of all three countries have been seriously weakened by the war, and the bulk of the pending United States foreign aid appropriation is allocated to those three countries and Thailand. In South Vietnam, in particular, autocratic President Nguyen Van Thieu has balked at the democratic task of "winning the hearts and minds of the people." With South Vietnam's jails already holding over 100,000 political prisoners, repressive police action has been notably stepped up since the launching of Hanoi's March, 1972, offensive.<sup>21</sup> By a recent decree, Thieu arbitrarily ruled that village officials are no longer to be elected, but are to be appointed; and the appointees are his henchmen. He rules by decree.

Certain testimony of South Vietnamese Vice President Nguyen Cao Ky with respect to the situation in South Vietnam can perhaps be taken as somewhat closer to the social realities than official American reports formulated for home consumption. Speaking in May, 1971, at the School of Social Welfare in Saigon, he remarked:

Corruption is rampaging. . . .

Today, not only are the people writhing under social injustices, but they are also becoming more and more miserable because of the harsh economic measures decreed in the name of national necessity. . . .

. . . a new class of profiteers has emerged, made up of those in positions of power and authority. . . .

In the meantime, our soldiers . . . are being given the lowest standard of living. . . .

The civil servants do not have a better lot than the soldiers.

Ky described the overall situation as he saw it: "South Vietnam is like a sinking boat, with a deceptively good coat of paint outside, and a helmsman who is unfaithful, disloyal, and dishonest. A whirl of the wind and the boat will sink to the bottom."<sup>22</sup> And ARVN, for all of the American investment of time, effort and dollars, is manifestly to be classed as distinctly less than a first-class fighting force.<sup>23</sup> If the North Vietnamese units in South Vietnam number something over 100,000 men, they constitute an effective fighting force; and the NLF guerrillas and political workers are met everywhere.

The situation is basically incurable. Where there is serious political, economic and social deterioration under a dictatorship at war, all depends upon the army; when the police power goes, all goes. The "Vietnamization" concept is not viable; a "Korean solution" is beyond reach. If the United States were to strive for attainment of the maximum strategic objective of victory through Vietnamization, it would

<sup>18</sup> For a penetrating analysis of American bureaucracy's inhibitions in the field of policy, see Ellsberg, *op cit.*, p. 89.

<sup>19</sup> Craig R. Whitney, *The New York Times*, September 25, 1972.

<sup>20</sup> Sydney H. Schanberg, *ibid.*, August 14; Craig R. Whitney, *ibid.*, September 1, 1972.

<sup>21</sup> See in this connection Sydney H. Schanberg, Week in Review section, *The New York Times*, August 13, 1972.

<sup>22</sup> "Nguyen Cao Ky: On the Sinking Boat," op-ed page, *The New York Times*, May 17, 1971.

<sup>23</sup> See in this connection the survey by Joseph B. Treaster, *The New York Times*, October 25, 1972.

have to continue the war—as Thieu would have it, indefinitely. But Washington evidently chose finally to aim for only the lesser objective set forth in the President's statement of May 8.

It is in that context that the Kissinger-Tho agreement, and the impasse, were to be viewed. Kissinger confirmed Hanoi's report that the agreement envisaged a cease-fire in place in *South Vietnam*, withdrawal of United States forces within 60 days of the signing of the agreement, repatriation of military prisoners of war and captured foreign civilians within the same time period, and the determination of the future of South Vietnam by elections under international supervision. A "National Council of Reconciliation and Concord" operating on the principle of unanimity would, in Kissinger's words, "help to promote the maintenance of the cease-fire and to supervise the elections on which the parties might agree." Further, "foreign countries" were to withdraw their military forces from Laos and Cambodia. An international conference would meet within 30 days, according to Kissinger, to develop the guarantees and establish the relationships of the various parties to one another "in greater detail." The American side had obtained the substance of the proposals set forth by the President on May 8.

But this fell far short of the desiderata sketched by the Joint Chiefs of Staff in January, 1969; and, by the same measure, it fell short of meeting the desires of Nguyen Van Thieu. It directly breached two of Thieu's "Four No's", those providing for no political role for Communists and no cession of territory, and it challenged the assertion that there should be no coalition government in South Vietnam. President Nixon had described Thieu as having concurred in the May 8 proposals. But Thieu, confronted by the prospect that they would be realized, retreated. In his speech of October 24, Thieu said that "if there is a cease-fire it must go along with a political settlement"; "the National Liberation Front has no right to stick its nose into our business"; the participants in any settlement would be the North and South Vietnamese governments. On October 30, South Vietnamese Foreign Minister Tran Van Lam underlined Thieu's position: to get Saigon's signature, Hanoi would have to agree to withdraw all its troops from South Vietnam and to reestablish the demilitarized zone between North and South. And Lam found the proposed National Council of Reconciliation and Concord objectionable—"a coalition government in disguise." Thieu had returned to his starting point.

In November, 1972, the United States thus stood at a critical crossroad. Would President Nixon stand by the essence of the agreement reached in October, or would he turn back to strive for Thieu's naked military "victory"? Henry Kissinger had said that "we give the assurance that we will stick by what we have

negotiated." Given the momentum and the expectations that have been built up, termination of the American war effort in Indochina appeared likely, but peace still hung precariously in the balance. It was evident in any event that the shape of a political settlement for the Indochinese states would be a complex affair, marked by revolutionary overtones.

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## INDONESIA

(Continued from page 258)

of Southeast Asia. The current participation of Thailand in the American war effort in Indochina is anachronism. The governments of Burma, Malaysia, Laos and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam have all firmly opted for neutralism in Southeast Asia. This pattern of response to events can be expected to be followed, if gingerly and with little enthusiasm, by the Philippine government.

The surest political fact in Southeast Asia, from the Philippines around to Burma, is that these newly organized and reorganized nations seek above all to evolve, within their own societies, indigenous forms of government and an indigenously constructed and applied political theory. They must and will control their own interrelationships, and together—sooner or later—prevent the grander intrusions of major powers.

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## SOUTH VIETNAM

(Continued from page 248)

place there, the intervention of the North Vietnamese army, equipped by the Russians and the Chinese, was undoubtedly necessary.

Subsequently, it appeared that the United States, drawing lessons from approximately 20 years of failure, had decided to negotiate its military disengagement in return for a cease-fire on the spot and the return of its prisoners of war. Whether a conclusion of this kind would be accompanied by a formal agreement on the nature of political power in Saigon was probably a question more of method than of principle. Certainly, South Vietnam will have a great deal of trouble recovering from the war. That it takes time to establish an appropriate political structure is obvious. But when the Americans finally pay off the mortgage, the nature of Vietnam's problems and the solutions proposed will look different. In any case, it will be surprising if the ideas expressed by the National Liberation Front and its apparatus do not play an interesting role in a post-American phase.

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*Erratum:* The editors of *Current History* regret that an error appeared in our October, 1972, issue. The coauthor of the article, "The Diplomacy of Détente: Soviet Efforts in West Europe," is Toby Trister.

## POLITICS IN MALAYSIA

(Continued from page 273)

The party that entered the coalition in Perak was an inveterate foe of the UMNO. It voted against the constitutional amendments. The recent coalition with the Pan-Malayan Islamic party in Kelantan, the UMNO's traditional enemy, seems to go against the Alliance's long-term interest. It could have recaptured the state in the next election, given the rising popularity of the UMNO.

The drive towards coalition, from the Alliance point of view, could be an attempt to neutralize the opposition. In terms of the exchange of power, the coalition was not very profitable to the Alliance. But perhaps the intention is to make the opposition parties lasting partners. This need for new partners is born out of the internal struggle for power within the Alliance.

The dissension within the UMNO has not subsided. The present leaders around the Prime Minister need new elements to support them in case of a challenge from within. The coalition has consolidated the position of the Prime Minister Tun Abdul Razak. The extremists are still there, and the coalition move is an

attempt to encircle the extremists or other challengers to the Prime Minister, for those joining the coalition would automatically express allegiance to him rather than to whatever faction might challenge him. The present political situation in Malaysia is thus still dominated by the internal history of the UMNO, the largest and only dominant single party in Parliament, with 52 seats.

A crisis is likely to emerge after the completion of the Second Malaysia Plan period (1971–1975). The plan intends to eliminate the socio-economic imbalance between the indigenous and the immigrant communities within 20 years. It aspires to have Malays and other indigenous people control and participate in 30 per cent of the business and industrial sectors.

It is highly improbable that the plan will succeed. It will meet the same problems as previous plans—improper implementation and insufficient preparation. The Second Malaysia Plan was not preceded by a comprehensive survey of the social and economic condition of the indigenous people. The promotion of indigenous people in business and industry has not been thought out in concrete terms. The plan suggests only a general aim. Specific areas are not discussed. Furthermore, the plan's liberal capitalist philosophy cannot ensure that such a plan, which includes also the private sector, can be fully implemented by the government. After the plan period or around the end of the plan period questions will arise as to whether the ruling power has succeeded in transforming Malaysian society.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> For further reference see Syed Hussein Alatas, *The Second Malaysia Plan 1971–1975: A Critique*. Occasional Paper, No. 15. Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, 1972.

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DANIEL G. REDMOND, JR., Publisher



## THE CAMBODIAN CIVIL WAR

(Continued from page 262)

mentarians. Several hours later, two other deputies arrived on the scene and were promptly executed. The governor's reports did not indicate any other deaths, injuries or attempted assaults against government officials. Thus, it is possible to infer that the National Assembly touched an organic nerve in Khmer society in attempting to usurp the essentially sacred authority of Sihanouk by turning over his office of Chief of State to one of their own, Cheng Heng. In any case, the Assembly was not highly respected by the general public. It was derogatorily referred to as a businessman's club, and it was widely believed, whether true or false, that the high cost of internal trucking and agricultural credit was the fault of certain deputies engaged in monopolistic enterprises.

Next to what appear to be carefully considered peasant demands, the provincial governor's attitude that there was nothing to discuss was startling. His suspicions about "real motives" and his patronizing decision to explain everything much later betray his assumption that peasant-citizens are told what to do in political life instead of having the right to participate on their own behalf. The attitude of the "negotiating" delegation was apparently similar. Subsequent events confirmed, however, that the coup group in Phnompenh was in no mood to discuss anything.

In retrospect, the events of March, 1970, in Kampong Cham assume great significance in terms of understanding peasant response to the contending pleas of Lon Nol in Phnompenh, Khieu Samphan and other revolutionary leaders in the *maquis*, and Prince Sihanouk in Peking. The loss of Sihanouk seems to have been a cultural, not a political, shock to many Khmers. For these people, the initial experience with the advancing Vietnamese revolutionary forces was probably positive, in that these Vietnamese supported them in supporting Sihanouk. The limited numbers of Vietnamese committed to the Cambodian battlefield at that time (between 8,000 and 12,000 according to American intelligence reports<sup>17</sup>) were not the threat to Khmer culture or civilian life which Lon Nol claimed. Peasants acknowledged this by not responding to the army-instigated massacres of Vietnamese. It would appear that racism, an essentially defensive phenomenon in Asian cultures, was more likely brought into play in reaction to the 50,000 American and South Vietnamese troops invading Cambodia on April 30, 1970. South Vietnamese forces numbering between 20,000 and 30,000 occupied eastern Cambodia until September, 1971, and their presence with its consequent looting, raping and property destruction was

perceived as threatening the survival of Kmer society, as is intensive American bombing.

In the countryside, Lon Nol's explanations of the war make little sense. This fact, coupled with the unresponsive, authoritarian disposition of the Phnompenh regime towards its citizenry, suggests the slow but certain demise of the Khmer Republic in the presence of a compelling Khmer alternative—the liberation front in alliance with Prince Sihanouk.

## LAOS

(Continued from page 270)

law of the jungle is not a pleasant prospect. Such concepts as neutrality would become quickly obsolete.

The latest chapter in this long story is being written by the Lao themselves as I write these words. Preliminary contacts between the opposing sides in Laos have been going on since 1970, when the Neo Lao Hak Sat proposed a five-point plan as a basis for negotiations. These contacts, carried on by Tiao Souk Vongsak, Secretary of State for Public Works in the coalition government, were never completely broken off even by the force of such events as the South Vietnamese invasion of southern Laos in February, 1971, and the resumption of the American bombing of North Vietnam in the spring of 1972. The main obstacles to more rapid progress had been the choice of a site for a higher-level meeting and the status to be enjoyed by each side, since the NLHS has not accepted the competence of the Vientiane government since 1964.

On October 14, 1972, a delegation representing the Lao Patriotic Forces, including both the NLHS and the left-wing faction of the centrists in Laos' tripartite scheme of things, arrived in Vientiane from Sam Neua aboard the regular Aeroflot flight from Hanoi. The leader of the delegation, General Phoune Sipraseuth, deputy commander-in-chief of the Lao People's Liberation Army (the Pathet Lao army) made a statement upon arrival which included notably the following: "If the Nixon Administration is willing to cease its policy of aggression and intervention in Laos and the Vientiane side regards the national interest as the most important thing, it is certain that the Laos question will be conveniently solved in the forthcoming talks between the two sides."<sup>3</sup> The government delegation to the talks, which began shortly afterwards, is led by Pheng Phongsavan, Minister of Interior.

Prince Souphanouvong, the NLHS leader, is believed to have made a visit to Peking sometime at the end of September, 1972. There is no question but that the Chinese strongly support the Lao talks. Furthermore, North Vietnam has recently reaffirmed her continued acceptance of the 1962 Geneva Accord as the basis for restoring peace in Laos. The position

<sup>17</sup> T. D. Allman, *Far East Economic Review*, September 4, 1971.

<sup>3</sup> Radio Pathet Lao, October 15, 1972.



of Prime Minister Prince Souvanna Phouma has all along been that there can be no basis other than the Geneva Accord.

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## THAILAND

(Continued from page 266)

all non-Communist nations in Asia, and for many years Japan's modest self-defense forces will not exert political leverage outside the home islands.

Communist China possesses an awesome population, a strong defensive capability, and the capacity to foment subversion in nearby societies. Yet the increasing exposure of the Chinese mainland through wider Western contacts during the past year has further revealed the backwardness of China's economy and the limitation of her armed forces as far as overt military aggression is concerned. It is only in the economic realm that Asia is experiencing multi-faceted change, caused by the expanding trade relations of numerous industrial nations, including Japan, the United States, Great Britain, West Germany, the Soviet Union and Australia.

Closer military cooperation between the United States and Thailand may be the initial step in the second phase of the post-Vietnam era. The rapid reduction of large American ground forces from certain areas in Asia and the insistence by the Nixon administration that non-Communist nations must exert greater efforts for their own defense are being followed by the redeployment of American air and naval forces to strategic locations for the long-range defense of the region. This action entails the less articulated aspect of the Nixon Doctrine which maintains that the United States must fulfil its treaty commitments in the area. It comprises an effort by American policymakers to maintain a regional balance of power in what I have called a "quakeland," where serious threats to the security of small contending nations in a specific sensitive area could escalate to large-scale confrontations between the United States and the Soviet Union or Communist China.<sup>13</sup>

The reopening of the air bases in Thailand for American use may be the first move toward a more permanent American military presence in the favorable political environment of the Thai kingdom. The strategic naval base at Sattahip on the Gulf of Thailand, for example, may well become an American "Singapore" in Southeast Asia and may gradually replace the naval facilities maintained by the United States at Subic Bay in the Philippines. Thai air bases at Takli and elsewhere in Thailand may replace the American air bases at Okinawa and Clark Field.

These moves by the United States could have a salutary effect on Thai foreign policy. They could

indicate to Thai political leaders (and to other Asians) that a reduced American presence in the region does not mean a weak American presence. They could reveal that in the early stages of the détente between the United States and Communist China the Peking regime is no longer seeking the impossible goal of removing all American influence from Asia. Instead, Chinese policy-makers now desire the retention of some American military power in northeast Asia to deter the possibility of Japanese expansion and sufficient American military presence in Southeast Asia to prevent the spread of Soviet influence.

American actions can likewise reassure the Thai ruling regime that it does not have to negotiate any "détente" with Peking primarily on Chinese terms. Perhaps most important, the Thai leaders and their people should realize that United States policy in Southeast Asia has not involved what some critics have called "Lyndon Johnson's war," or "Richard Nixon's war," or "America's war." The American policy to deter North Vietnamese expansion in the region and to assist small non-Communist societies has enormous security implications for Thailand. The Thai nation has a crucial stake in the outcome of this policy. Thailand does incur some risks by cooperating with the United States, but she will confront much larger dangers if she seeks to remain aloof from cooperation with the United States. In spite of its large military power, the United States cannot by itself preserve the independence of the nations adjoining North Vietnam. The United States needs some allies to pursue this goal. The overlapping interests of the threatened societies consequently encourage effective joint policies for the future security of Thailand and other nations in Southeast Asia.

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## BOOKS

(Continued from page 274)

about the Indonesian revolution of 1945. He concentrates on Java and covers the short period of revolution fully.

THE AIR WAR IN INDOCHINA. EDITED BY RAPHAEL LITTAUER AND NORMAN UPHOFF. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972. 289 pages, appendices and index, \$8.95 hardcover, \$3.95 paper.)

This detailed study of the air war in Indochina was prepared under the auspices of the Cornell University Program on Peace Studies. The study is complete through February, 1972, although the information for the period not covered by the *Pentagon Papers* is not as detailed as could be hoped for.

The study group has assembled a balanced assessment of the successes and failures of the American air war in Indochina.

O.E.S.

<sup>13</sup> Frank C. Darling, "American Policy in Vietnam: Its Role in the Quakeland Theory and International Peace," *Asian Survey* (August, 1971), pp. 818-39.

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# THE MONTH IN REVIEW

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*A CURRENT HISTORY chronology covering the most important events of October, 1972, to provide a day-by-day summary of world affairs.*

## INTERNATIONAL

### Berlin Crisis

- Oct. 2—The East German government announces that new visiting permits are available for West Berliners, good for 3 months for 1-day trips to East Berlin.
- Oct. 17—East and West Germany exchange notes of ratification of a treaty to relax the rules of transport between the 2 countries.
- Oct. 23—U.S., British, French and U.S.S.R. representatives open talks on a joint declaration to reaffirm 4-power prerogatives over Berlin and Germany.

### European Economic Community (Common Market)

- Oct. 7—British Prime Minister Edward Heath appoints Christopher Soames and George Thompson as Britain's members on the Common Market's commission.
- Oct. 19—The leaders of the 9 European countries making up the enlarged Common Market open their first meeting in Paris. They decide to establish a European monetary cooperation fund effective April 1, 1973.

### Middle East Crisis

(See also *Israel; West Germany*)

- Oct. 3—Kamel Nasser, an official spokesman of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, announces the withdrawal of commando forces from all areas of southern Lebanon near Israel where Israeli forces made a sweep 2 weeks ago.
- Oct. 15—Israeli Air Force planes attack 4 Al Fatah guerrilla installations in Lebanon and 1 in Syria.
- Oct. 29—Palestinian guerrillas hijack a West German Lufthansa airliner over Turkey, forcing it to fly to Munich and then to Zagreb, Yugoslavia, where the 3 surviving Arab commandos of the Munich Olympic massacre are released by West German authorities to escape in the hijacked plane to Tripoli; 20 passengers and crew members are hostages.
- Oct. 30—The hostages and plane are released to return to West Germany.
- Syrian sources report more than 60 dead and 70 wounded in Israeli air attacks against commando bases near Damascus and against a Syrian army camp. Meanwhile, the Syrians shell the Israeli-held Golan Heights.

### Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries

- Oct. 5—Representatives of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Iraq and Abu Dhabi reach an agreement with the major Western oil companies on the terms under which the 5 countries will eventually gain control of the companies' concessions in the Persian Gulf Area.

### United Nations

- Oct. 23—A resolution condemning Portugal for a violation of the Senegalese border on October 12 is passed by the U.N. Security Council; there are 12 votes for, and 3 abstaining.

### War in Indochina

(See also *U.S., Foreign Policy*)

#### MILITARY RECORD

- Oct. 2—The U.S. command reports 320 strikes by American fighter-bombers over North Vietnam yesterday; this is the largest number of strikes in 2 weeks.
- Oct. 3—American officials report a guerrilla attack on the U.S. air base at Udon, Thailand, last night. U.S. aircraft raided enemy buildings in Laos yesterday, according to U.S. sources.
- Oct. 6—U.S. B-52's fly 11 missions within 30 miles of Saigon in an attempt to cut off enemy infiltration towards Saigon.
- Oct. 7—Saigon sources report fighting with Communist forces within 20 miles of Saigon.
- Oct. 8—President Nguyen Van Thieu again denounces the North Vietnamese proposal for a 3-segment coalition government in South Vietnam.
- Oct. 11—South Vietnamese military sources report that no attempt is being made to retake the 3 hamlets held by North Vietnamese infiltrators 20 miles to the north of Saigon.
- The quarters of the French diplomatic mission to North Vietnam are wrecked in an American bombing raid on Hanoi; France's chief diplomat in Hanoi, Pierre Susini, is critically injured.
- The U.S. Defense Department expresses regrets over the bombing and says the destruction might have been caused by a North Vietnamese defense missile that went astray.
- Oct. 16—The U.S. command reports 400 fighter-bombers struck North Vietnam yesterday in the second heaviest bombing of 1972, while B-52's were

hitting suspected enemy positions in all countries of Indochina and as close to Saigon as 15 miles.

Oct. 17—The South Vietnamese command reports that enemy attacks on the main routes around Saigon continue to disrupt normal traffic.

Police sources in Bangkok, Thailand, report that Communist guerrillas attacked government outposts in northeastern Thailand today.

Oct. 18—The South Vietnamese military command reports that Communist troops seized 6 villages in the Central Highlands yesterday.

Sources in Cambodia report that the North Vietnamese overran 3 Cambodian garrisons within 18 miles of Phnompenh yesterday, shutting down one of the main supply routes to the capital.

Oct. 19—French diplomat Pierre Susini dies in France of injuries suffered in the bombing of the French mission buildings in Hanoi.

Oct. 20—The U.S. Defense Department announces that an extensive investigation shows that it was an American bomb that “inadvertently struck” the French diplomatic mission quarters in Hanoi on October 11.

Oct. 24—South Vietnamese sources report heavy fighting with North Vietnamese forces near Pleiku, along the coast in Binh Dinh Province and along the roads leading into Saigon.

Oct. 27—In an apparent effort to gain territory before a cease-fire, North Vietnamese forces are increasing their small-scale attacks throughout South Vietnam. The South Vietnam command reports 113 enemy-initiated incidents in the previous 24 hours.

Oct. 31—The U.S. command reports heavy bombing raids over southern North Vietnam.

#### NEGOTIATIONS FOR A CEASE-FIRE

Oct. 11—Henry Kissinger, U.S. President Richard Nixon’s national security adviser, finishes 4 straight days of negotiations with North Vietnamese representatives in Paris.

Oct. 13—Le Duc Tho, North Vietnamese Politburo member and representative to the Paris peace talks, issues a statement saying that “there are still many difficult things to settle in the peace negotiations going on in Paris.”

Oct. 20—Henry Kissinger and U.S. Ambassador to South Vietnam, Ellsworth Bunker, confer with President Nguyen Van Thieu of South Vietnam for almost 4 hours.

Oct. 23—Henry Kissinger leaves Saigon after 5 days of meetings with government leaders in South Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Thailand.

Oct. 24—In a nationwide broadcast, President Nguyen Van Thieu of South Vietnam says that all the peace proposals discussed by Kissinger with the North Vietnamese are so far unacceptable to South Vietnam.

Oct. 26—Hanoi radio broadcasts a statement saying that the U.S. and North Vietnam have agreed in Paris on a ceasefire in the Indochina war, to be signed in Paris and Hanoi before the end of October.

At a news conference in Washington, Henry Kissinger says that “peace is at hand” in Indochina: a cease-fire and political arrangement can be reached in one more negotiating session. He denies Hanoi’s assertion that the U.S. agreed to sign the peace agreement by October 31.

Oct. 29—Administration officials say without qualification that the Indochina peace accord will not be signed by October 31.

#### ARGENTINA

Oct. 24—The newspaper *Crónica* says that former dictator Juan D. Perón will return November 17, to attempt to win the presidential election scheduled for March, 1973.

#### AUSTRALIA

Oct. 10—Prime Minister William McMahon calls for federal elections December 2; 125 seats in the House of Representatives will be at issue.

#### AUSTRIA

Oct. 23—Reuters reports that a nationwide strike of doctors and dentists has tied up the nation’s health service; the strike began 5 days ago.

#### BANGLADESH

Oct. 9—A joint statement declares that India and Bangladesh are temporarily suspending their 6-month-old border trade; according to the Bangladesh delegation, meaningful checks and controls have not been established.

#### BELGIUM

Oct. 3—700,000 Belgian shopkeepers and other independent workers organized by the Common Front of Independent Workers end a 2-day strike for public sympathy.

#### CAMBODIA

Oct. 14—The government of Premier Son Ngoc Thanh resigns; the Cambodian radio reports that President Lon Nol has asked the secretary general of the Social Republican party, Hang Thun Hak, to form a new government.

Oct. 15—Premier Hang Thun Hak names a new 15-man Social Republican Cabinet.

#### CANADA

Oct. 31—According to unofficial returns, Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau’s Liberal party won 108 of the 264 seats in yesterday’s election for the House of Commons; the opposition Progressive Con-

servatives won 109 seats; minor parties won the balance of the seats in the closest election in Canadian history.

### CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Oct. 21—*Agence France Presse* reports from Bagui that the government of President Jean Bedel Boassa has ordered prison terms of from three to ten years for tax evaders, and prison terms for "vagabonds" and "idlers."

### CHILE

Oct. 12—A state of emergency is declared in Santiago and much of central Chile because of a crippling nationwide trucking strike.

Oct. 13—President Salvador Allende Gossens' government takes control of radio broadcasting as shopkeepers and small businessmen strike in defiance of the state of emergency.

Oct. 14—The government puts 4 more provinces under emergency rule.

Oct. 16—Riot police battle with demonstrators in Santiago as strikes continue. For the 2d time in a week, the government takes control of Chilean radio stations.

In Paris at a special meeting of the Intergovernmental Council of Copper Exporting Countries, the Chilean delegation tries to persuade other nations not to divert their copper supplies to Chile's customers.

Oct. 24—Chileans observe a "day of silence" to protest government programs.

Oct. 31—The 15-man Cabinet resigns after 3 weeks of strikes and demonstrations.

### CHINA, PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF

(See also *West Germany, Spain*)

Oct. 11—In a dispatch appearing in the *Philadelphia Bulletin*, it is reported that Premier Chou En-lai has told a group of American newspaper editors that former Defense Minister Lin Piao was burned to death in the crash of his plane in September, 1971, while he was trying to escape to the U.S.S.R. after an abortive plot against Chairman Mao Tse-tung.

Oct. 16—It is announced in Bonn that Chinese Foreign Minister Chi Peng-fei will visit West Germany in 1973. An agreement establishing diplomatic relations between China and West Germany was signed in Peking October 11.

Oct. 21—The appointment of three new ministers with military backgrounds to the State Council is announced by Peking.

### DAHOMY

Oct. 27—Following yesterday's coup d'etat, an 11-man military government takes control, headed by

Major Mathieu Kerekou as President and Defense Minister. This is the nation's 5th military coup since it gained independence from France in 1960.

### DENMARK

Oct. 2—With 89.8 per cent of the eligible voters voting, Danes vote 1,955,932 to 1,124,106 to join the Common Market.

Oct. 3—Premier Otto Krag resigns for personal reasons; the Social Democratic party names Anker Jorgensen as his successor.

### EGYPT

Oct. 2—President Anwar Sadat's government announces that government officials can no longer seize a citizen's property by a simple administrative measure; a 3-man court and a 12-man jury will review all cases involving the seizure of property since 1964.

Oct. 16—Premier Aziz Sidky arrives in Moscow to confer with Soviet leaders about aid in the struggle against Israel.

Oct. 18—Sidky returns to Cairo; a joint communiqué does not mention new pledges of Soviet aid or a set date for a visit to Cairo by Soviet party leader Leonid I. Brezhnev.

Oct. 21—The British Broadcasting Corporation reports that army officers tried to overthrow the Sadat government last week.

Oct. 25—In a closed-door meeting with 600 members of his party and members of Parliament, Sadat reviews the state of relations with the Soviet Union; it is reported that a majority favor continuing limited cooperation with the U.S.S.R.

### FRANCE

(See also *Intl, War in Indochina*)

Oct. 6—France and Poland sign a 10-year treaty of "friendship and cooperation" at the close of a 5-day visit to Paris of Polish Communist leader Edward Gierek.

### GERMANY, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF (East)

(See also *India*)

Oct. 6—The Council of State announces a sweeping amnesty for criminals and political prisoners on the eve of the nation's 23d anniversary.

Oct. 13—The Parliament passes a law providing that those who left the country "without permission" before January 1, 1972, and who have not returned will not have criminal proceedings instituted against them, although they will lose their citizenship.

### GERMANY, FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF (West)

(See also *Intl, Middle East Crisis; China*)



- Oct. 4—Interior Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher announces that two Palestinian organizations have been banned because they threatened violence.
- Oct. 10—Foreign Minister Walter Scheel arrives in Peking to sign an agreement establishing diplomatic relations with China tomorrow.

### GREECE

- Oct. 7—In Athens, a U.S. Embassy spokesman confirms the fact that Greece has agreed to grant U.S. servicemen and their dependents who settle in Greece under the new home-port plan the same special status enjoyed by other U.S. military personnel in Greece.

### INDIA

- Oct. 8—A Foreign Ministry spokesman in New Delhi reports that India has extended full diplomatic recognition to East Germany.
- Oct. 24—Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and Pakistani President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto are reported to have exchanged letters to try to break the deadlock over the 500-mile-long Kashmir cease-fire line.

### IRAN

- Oct. 13—After signing a 15-year treaty of economic cooperation and trade, Shah Mohammed Riza Pahlavi leaves Moscow for a tour of the U.S.S.R.

### ISRAEL

- Oct. 16—Premier Golda Meir declares that 3 senior officials of the security service have been dismissed because of the failure to protect the Israeli Olympic team at Munich, where 11 members of the team were killed by Arab terrorists September 5.
- Oct. 25—Letter-bombs addressed to U.S. President Richard Nixon and 2 members of his Cabinet are intercepted in Tel Aviv by Israeli postal workers.

A nationwide epidemic of wildcat strikes is reported by *The New York Times*.

### ITALY

(See also *U.S.S.R.*)

- Oct. 10—A strike of almost 2 million workers is called off at the last moment by labor unions, after a basic chemical industry agreement is reached and the government undertakes an increased commitment to mediate between labor and management.
- Oct. 17—The Cabinet approves the adoption of a value-added tax instead of turnover and sales taxes. The value-added tax, which will become effective January 1, 1973, will bring Italy's fiscal system into line with her E.E.C. partners.

### JAPAN

- Oct. 11—At a news conference, Premier Kakuei Tanaka defends his government's plan to double military spending in the next 5 years.

### KOREA (South)

- Oct. 7—President Park Chung Hee proclaims martial law, suspends part of the constitution, dissolves the National Assembly, suspends all political activity, imposes press censorship and closes all colleges and universities, because of the "rapidly changing international situation" and because of the need to negotiate successfully with North Korea.
- Oct. 12—North and South Korea open a political conference at Panmunjom to seek the eventual reunification of the two countries.
- Oct. 23—The Cabinet issues 3 special laws to prepare for a national referendum to be held in November to change the constitution.
- Oct. 24—North Korea demands that South Korea change its anti-Communist policies and laws to assure the success of the talks on reunification.
- Oct. 27—Park reveals a proposed new constitution which would allow him to serve as President indefinitely; the proposal must be approved by a national referendum in November.

### LAOS

- Oct. 31—Peace talks which opened in Vientiane on October 17 between the government and the Pathet Lao report no progress.

### NORWAY

- Oct. 7—After its defeat in the referendum on the Common Market, Premier Trygve Bratelli's Labor government resigns.
- Oct. 17—King Olav V swears in a 3-party minority coalition government led by Christian People's party chairman Lars Korvald.

### PAKISTAN

(See also *India*)

- Oct. 20—After 4 days of conferences among the leaders of all parties represented in the National Assembly, the leaders agree on a new constitution providing for a President and a Prime Minister responsible to a 2-chamber federal Parliament.

### PHILIPPINES

- Oct. 2—The government decrees the death penalty for those who kill with firearms they are not authorized to possess.
- Oct. 6—President Ferdinand Marcos gives permission for a daily economic newspaper and a television station to resume operation.
- Oct. 16—The government authorizes publication of a new daily newspaper, *The Times-Journal*.
- Oct. 17—The government says it has arrested at least 4 persons including 2 foreigners for an alleged Communist plot to kill President Marcos.
- Oct. 21—Marcos issues a martial law decree allotting

12.5 acres of land to every tenant farmer and limiting landowners to 17.5 acres.

## POLAND

(See also *France*)

Oct. 31—Premier Piotr Jaroszewicz says the food price freeze will remain in effect for at least 1 year.

## SPAIN

Oct. 21—In Madrid, Spanish diplomatic sources reveal that Spain and China have been holding exploratory talks on establishing diplomatic relations.

## TANZANIA

Oct. 5—A joint communiqué issued in Somalia declares that Tanzania and Uganda have settled their dispute. (See "Uganda," *Current History*, November, 1972, p. 238.)

## UGANDA

(See also *Tanzania*)

Oct. 18—President Idi Amin authorizes Ugandan troops to arrest civilians without warrant or court order, according to a decree published today.

Oct. 19—Amin orders Asians with Kenyan, Tanzanian and Zambian citizenship to leave by November 8 also.

Oct. 23—The Uganda radio says that Amin has been hospitalized for fatigue.

## U.S.S.R.

(See also *Iran*; *U.S.*, *Foreign Policy*)

Oct. 3—Seven youths are sentenced to prison terms ranging from 18 months to 3 years by the Lithuanian Supreme Court on charges growing out of rioting in May, 1972.

Oct. 20—Soviet sources report that five year plan investments are being shifted to compensate for the harvest setbacks.

Oct. 21—It is unofficially revealed in Moscow that 60 more Jewish families will be allowed to emigrate to Israel without payment of exit fees; the total of Jewish families reportedly exempted from the fees in the last few days is 139.

Oct. 26—In Moscow, Italy and the Soviet Union agree to consult regularly twice a year.

## UNITED KINGDOM

### Great Britain

(See *Yugoslavia*)

Oct. 2—Prime Minister Edward Heath visits in Rome for 2 days of conference with Italian leaders and for a conference with the Pope.

Oct. 3—In a crucial session of its 5-day annual conference, the Labor party pledges to renegotiate the terms of Britain's membership in the Common Market when it attains power, but it does not adopt a pledge to leave the Market altogether.

Oct. 4—A boycott of London's schools involves parents and teachers in a series of disputes. School busing is also at issue.

Oct. 9—Anthony Barber, Chancellor of the Exchequer, abolishes the fixed bank rate.

Oct. 10—A government "green paper" submitted to Parliament proposes a negative income tax; welfare recipients would become part of the income tax system.

Oct. 12—Queen Elizabeth II is mocked by hundreds of jeering students as she visits Stirling University in Scotland.

Oct. 18—The British Ministry of Agriculture reports that an Icelandic gunboat has rammed a British trawler inside Iceland's disputed 50-mile fishing limit. The Icelandic Coast Guard denies the charge.

Oct. 19—The House of Commons refuses to accept a motion to allow its debates to be televised.

Oct. 31—A new session of Parliament opens.

## Northern Ireland

Oct. 27—Local elections in Ulster scheduled for December 6 are to be postponed because of threatened violence, the British government announces. Secretary of State for Northern Ireland William Whitelaw says that the postponed elections will be held sometime in the spring of 1973.

Oct. 30—In a "green paper" on constitutional reform the government promises that Northern Ireland will remain part of the United Kingdom as long as the majority so desire; new concessions and a wider role are offered to the half-million Catholic minority.

## UNITED STATES

### Economy

Oct. 5—The Labor Department says that the rise in wholesale prices in September was the smallest for any month since April.

Oct. 6—The unemployment rate remained unchanged at 5.5 per cent of the labor force in September according to the Labor Department.

### Foreign Policy

(See also *Intl.*, *War in Indochina*)

Oct. 3—President Richard M. Nixon and Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei A. Gromyko sign documents putting into effect the two agreements on limiting strategic arms reached in Moscow in May.

Oct. 12—Henry Kissinger reports to President Nixon on his four days of private talks with North Vietnam negotiators in Paris.

Oct. 18—The United States and the Soviet Union reach a trade agreement which provides for payment by the Russians of \$722 million in World War II Lend-Lease debts and the extension of United

States government-backed credits for sales to the Soviet Union. The Senate is on record as opposed to the accords if the Soviet Union does not lift the exit fees imposed on Jews desiring to emigrate from the Soviet Union. (See also *U.S.S.R.*)

## Government

Oct. 3—By a vote of 20 to 15, the House Banking and Currency Committee rejects a proposal to hold public hearings on the bugging of the Democratic party's headquarters at the Watergate in June, 1972.

The House refuses to send a bill increasing the federal minimum wage to a Senate-House conference committee, effectively killing the proposal for 1972.

Oct. 4—The Senate votes down welfare reform legislation. By a vote of 46 to 40, it calls instead for the testing of competing welfare reform plans over the next two to four years, leaving the current welfare program essentially unchanged.

The Congress overrides the President's veto of a bill increasing railroad retirement benefits by 20 per cent.

Oct. 12—After failing to invoke closure, the Senate votes 59 to 26 to put aside anti-busing legislation for the rest of the year.

Oct. 13—The Senate completes congressional action on a \$74.3 billion defense appropriation bill. This is the largest defense appropriation bill since World War II, although it is \$5.2 billion less than the Nixon administration requested.

Oct. 17—The House Majority Leader, Representative Hale Boggs (D., La.), is missing aboard a plane flight in Alaska.

Oct. 18—The 92nd Congress adjourns after overriding President Nixon's veto of the \$24-billion water pollution bill.

Oct. 19—Secretary of the Treasury George P. Schultz says that President Nixon plans to hold government spending close to \$250 billion this year, despite Congress' refusal to grant him specific authority to do so.

Oct. 20—In a ceremony at Independence Hall in Philadelphia, President Nixon signs the \$30.8-billion revenue-sharing bill.

Oct. 27—President Nixon vetoes nine bills because they would "breach the budget."

Oct. 28—President Nixon signs 44 bills into law.

Oct. 30—The President signs 60 measures, including a \$5-billion Social Security bill H.R. 1, containing 144 changes in welfare and health benefits, most of which will not go into effect until fiscal 1974.

## Military

Oct. 12—The Senate confirms the nomination of

General Creighton W. Abrams as Army Chief of Staff. The vote is 84 to 2.

## Politics

Oct. 12—*The New York Times* reports that former Assistant Attorney General Robert C. Mardian obtained confidential information from the Justice Department for possible use in President Nixon's political campaign. The same source says that on at least one occasion he sent two men, later indicted in the Watergate affair, to pick up such information.

Oct. 15—*Time* magazine and the *Washington Post* link Dwight L. Chapin, a deputy assistant to the President, and Donald H. Segretti, who has been previously identified as a Republican political sabotage agent.

Oct. 25—White House press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler denies that H. R. Haldeman, the President's chief of staff, is implicated in a campaign of political espionage.

## Supreme Court

Oct. 10—By a vote of 8 to 1, the Supreme Court prohibits an Ohio plan for direct tuition grants to parents of children in private and parochial schools. It affirms a lower court decision that the law constitutes a violation of the principle of separation of church and state.

## VIETNAM (South)

(See *Intl. War in Indochina*)

## VIETNAM (North)

(See also *Intl. War in Indochina*)

Oct. 21—Premier Pham Van Dong tells a senior editor of *Newsweek* in an interview that his government is ready to accept a cease-fire.

## YEMEN

Oct. 9—A Southern Yemeni government spokesman charges that Yemeni troops have invaded a Southern Yemeni island in the Red Sea.

Oct. 18—A cease-fire between Yemen and Southern Yemen is announced by Yemen's Premier Mohsen al-Aini.

## YUGOSLAVIA

Oct. 10—The Cabinet raises the price of sugar, bread, cooking oil and margarine; sugar begins to reappear on the shelves of grocery stores, with a 7.5 per cent increase in price.

Oct. 17—Britain's Queen Elizabeth II is greeted by crowds in Belgrade as she visits President Tito.

Oct. 25—It is announced that the two top-level party leaders in Serbia have resigned in response to President Tito's October 7 demands for a more highly disciplined party.

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